

SINS
And Their
EVIL EFFECTS

By
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English Translation
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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Introduction

Disobedience to Allah is the root cause of the plight of the people today - their financial difficulties, restlessness and anxieties. They neglect His commands and abide by their own rules and regulations. Allah says about it :

وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَيَعْفُوا عَنْ كَثِيرٍ.

(سورة شوری: الآية: ٣٠)

{And whatever of misfortune befalls you, it is for what your own hands have earned and He pardons much.} (42:30)

مَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِنْ نَفْسِكَ

{Whatsoever of good befalls you , it is from Allah, and whatsoever of evil befalls you, it is from yourself.} (4:79)

Every blessing that man receives, is Allah's favour and mercy. He showers on man His blessings. On the other hand, the drought, commotion and fear that grip us are our own doings. We have disobeyed Allah and wronged ourselves and we have paved the path to our own ruin. Sin and disobedience create a plethora of problems and mischiefs on land and sea. Allah says:

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ. (سورة روم: ٤١)

{Corruption has appeared in the land and the sea on account of that which men's hands earned, that He may make them taste some part of that which they have done, so that they may return.}(30:41)

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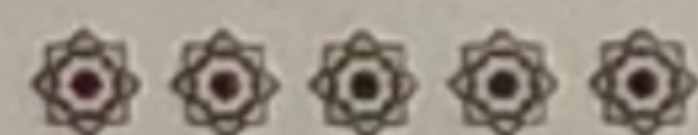
{Corruption has appeared in the land and the sea on account of that which men's hands earned, that He may make them taste some part of that which they have done, so that they may return.}(30:41)

The moment a man commits a sin, Allah creates for him a punishment. These are words of a saintly man who also disclosed that Allah only lets us have a glimpse of the punishment otherwise if He were to give us the punishment for all our sins then, not to speak of mankind, no insect would survive on earth.

This book is a great book on this subject. Its author was an expert and one of the great scholars. He was at the same time, a scholar, an ascetic and a devoted worshipper. He was Jamaluddin Abul Faraj Abdur Rahmān ibn Al-Jawzi al-Qarshi al-Baghdadi رحمه الله عليه. He was the author of innumerable profitable books. He was an adept admonisher and orator. Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali رحمه الله عليه said about him in Dhil Tabaqāt al-Hanābilah:

لم يترك فنا من الفنون الا وله فيه مصنف

(He did not omit any art or science without writing on it.)



Life sketch of Ibn Jawzi رحمه الله عليه

He was Jamaluddin Abul Faraj Abdur Rahmān ibn Ali ibn Ubaydullah ibn Abdullah ibn Hummādi ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Ja'far ibn Abdullah ibn Qāsim ibn an-Nadr ibn al Qāsim Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn al-Qāsim ibn Abū Bakr ①.

He belonged to the Hanbali School of thought. He was a hafiz, an exegete, a preacher, a historian and a writer. He was Known as Ibn Jawzi رحمه الله عليه. He was born in a village in Baghdad, Darb Habib in 508 AH or 509 AH or - most probably- after 510 AH, because he said once that he began to write book sin 528 AH, when he was seventeen years old. He is quoted in Tarikh Ibn Najjar as having said, ".....My respected father died in 514 AH my mother said that I was three years old then." ②

His family were occupied in the bronze trade. This is why he was also known as as-Saffār.

Though he lost his father when he was only three years old, his excellent upbringing was not halted. Allah put him in the care of a compassionate, caring paternal aunt. She spared no effort and time towards his training and education and put him in the care of Abdul Fadl ibn Nāsir رحمه الله عليه. Ibn Jawzi رحمه الله عليه not only owed his excellent upbringing to him but also heard hadith from him (meaning, took lessons of the hadith). ③

Another reason for his excellent training and education was that they were affluent. His father had left behind much wealth and property. He often mentioned this in his writings. He wrote in one of his books (صيد الخاطر) Sayd ul-Khātir "One who is affluent must spend what he can on himself. This is my own experience. When I cut down my

① Adh-Dhil, Ibn Rajab p399.

② Wafayat ul A'yān v2, p321

③ Tadhkirah al-Huffaz, Dhahabi.

diet and stopped eating nutritional food, I fell ill and many of my engagements were impaired and much of my worship had to be cut down. I used to recite five juzz (parts) of the Qur'an every day but, after reducing my food intake, I could not keep up my practice. So, I realised that even one morsel was instrumental in fetching me great reward, for, each letter of the Qur'an gets its reciter ten pieties." But, he used a balanced diet ideal for the body and this is a sign of intelligence because an unbalanced diet is harmful to health.

When he attained the age of puberty, he also encountered great difficulties which he faced bravely. He said of these difficulties that they seemed to him sweeter than honey in order to attain his objective. He ate dried, stale bread and set out to acquire knowledge. When he was hungry, he sat at the banks of river Eesā, for, he could not eat parched bread without water. He took some water with every morsel of bread and enjoyed it. This did not impair his strength.①

Even in his childhood, Ibn Jawzi رحمه الله عليه was righteous and disinterested in the temporal things. He kept aloof of other people lest his time be wasted. In this way he protected his soul, body and time. Imām Ibn Kathir رحمه الله عليه corroborated this statement and also said that he shunned that food of whose lawfulness he was unsure and he came out of his house only for the Friday salāh and did not like to play with other children.

A secluded life:-

He wrote in his book (صيد الخاطر) Sayd ul-Khātir, "There is nothing better than seclusion for the sake of knowledge and learning which are the best companions. A secluded person is protected from waste and from unnecessary things, gains honour and save himself from disgrace. Seclusion enables the 'have-nots' to be content with little and so endure hardship for the sake of religion, and defend themselves from the devil's mischief, tyranny of the rulers and trials at the hands of the masses. But, seclusion is not preferred for a scholar because if he keeps away from the ignorant then he will forget what he has learnt."

Rejection of some mystics:-

He rejected the idea of seclusion by the mystics. He said, "How many scholars have lost their knowledge because they kept aloof from the masses! They could have reformed them through their knowledge.....But, it is a different thing if done to save oneself from mischief". He condemned some ignorant sufis (mystics), saying, "I see many people trespass the limits of Shari'ah as though the word of the mystics and ascetics is tantamount to Shari'ah for them, for, the path that the mystic trek today is not the seerah of Allah's Messenger ﷺ and his saḥābah's ﷺ model. The Prophet ﷺ also engaged in light humour, and liked the good things. Sometimes he humoured (Sayyidah) Ayshah رضي الله تعالى عنها and had a little race with her. He ate meat, loved sweet eatables and drank sweet water. His saḥābah رضي الله تعالى عنهم emulated him. In contrast, the mystics and ascetics have invented their own way of life."

His standing among the ulamā:-

Eminent ulamā who succeeded him speak highly of him. Ibn Khalikān رحمه الله عليه said that Ibn Jawzi رحمه الله عليه was the greatest *aalim* of his time, the *imām* of hadith and author of countless books on many subjects. But some people engage in exaggeration, for instance, someone said, "If his writings are compared with his age and then the manuscripts divided by the number of days of his life then they come to nine per day!"

Ibn Jawzi رحمه الله عليه was a devoted reader, given to much study. He said that during his student days, he studied more than twenty thousand books. How many more he may have read there after! He said that if any one seeks to attain perfection in knowledge then only any study of books is important for him and he can gauge the knowledge of his predecessors and their great courage. "It will keep the heart alert and the mind sharp, and lead one to heights. Never is a book useless. The ulamā who have nothing to do with books lack lofty courage and are not worthy of emulating. None of them will possess taqwā and diffuse goodness. Study the lives and books of the predecessors to appreciate them. In this way, you will stand above many contemporary ulamā

in many sciences. "Ibn Jawzi رحمه الله عليه wrote countless books on tafsir, hadith, medicine, preaching, etc. They reveal his perfection in those sciences.

Ibn Jawzi رحمه الله عليه in the eyes of Dhahabi رحمه الله عليه :-

Dhahabi رحمه الله said that Ibn Jawzi رحمه الله was an expert in tafsir and moderate religion. He had perfect command on the text of hadith but was like the muhaddithin on the soundness or other wise of hadith.^① He also said, "Ibn Jawzi was not well known as a hāfiz, but he had no equal in his knowledge."^② He had built a madrasah with a library to which he denoted all his books. But, he continued to teach at other madāris too.

Hāfiz Ibn Ubayshi رحمه الله said about Ibn Jawzi رحمه الله that he was a very good debator, an excellent administrator and organiser, sweet-tongued and a distinguished orator. His time and work were very productive. People learnt hadith from him for forty years.

Sermonising:-

His effort was not limited to writing, compiling and use of the pen. He was unique in speech and oratory, and was acknowledge not only by the masses but also by the elite. Ibn Kathir رحمه الله also praised him as an excellent orator and preacher and an eloquent admonisher. He held his audience spellbound and his words had a great effect on them.

Truthful:-

When it was about religion, he would not compromise with anyone, not even great people. Chieftains and rulers attended his sermons. During a sermon, he turned to a corner where Khalifa al-Mustansa al-Abbās رحمه الله was sitting, and said, "O Amir-ul-Muminin, if I say anything about you then I fear you, but if I say nothing then I fear for you. O Amir-ul-Muminin, to ask you to fear to Allah is many times better than to comfort you that you are of ahl ul-bayt and already forgiven and assured of paradise." He also quoted Umar ؓ as saying, "Were I to learn of a governor

(or state officer) oppressing (the people), I would ascribe that to myself."

Ibn Jawzi رحمه الله never bowed before anyone to compromise on the truth. He resisted bid'ah and munkarāt and succeeded in putting them down. He attributed his success to Allah's help.

Trial on the true path:-

Towards the end of his life he faced trial and mischief. There was a Rukn Abdus Salaam ibn Abdul Wahāb ibn Abdul Qādir al-Jayli. He was a writer but his ideas were off the right path, leaning towards the zindiq. The minister, Ibn Yūnus al-Hanbali burnt all of his books and handed over his madrasa to Ibn Jawzi رحمه الله. However later on a rebel, wicked minded rāfidi, Ibn Qassāb became the minister. He attempted to nab Ibn Yūnus and his colleagues. Rukn Abdus Salaam wasted no time to meet him and tell him that Ibn Jawzi رحمه الله was the closest friend of Ibn Yūnus and a descendant of Abū Bakr ؓ, and complained to him that Ibn Yūnus had seized his grandfather's madrasah and handed it to Ibn Jawzi رحمه الله on whose advice he had burnt his and his grandfather's books.

Ibn Qassāb wrote to Khalifa an-Nasir who leaned towards the rāfidi and had also intended to hurt Ibn Jawzi رحمه الله. He proclaimed that Ibn Jawzi رحمه الله should be given the charge of Rukn Abdus Salaam. Accordingly, he went to Ibn Jawzi's رحمه الله house abused him and disgraced him. He confiscated his house and threw out his family members. The honourable imām was arrested and taken to wasit by boat. He was locked in a dingy, narrow cell, all alone. He had to cook his own food but there was no arrangements to wash his clothes. He spent five years in this way, during which period he was not allowed to have a bath. But, the practicing ulamā, the mujāhids and the sincere saintly men have always shown perseverance during hardship and firmness in preaching against the falsehood of the cruel rulers. Ibn Jawzi رحمه الله kept up this practice. He writes in Sayd ul-Khātir. "To put knowledge into action is the real principal and he is indigent who wasted his life an acquiring the knowledge which he does not put into practice. Not only

①.....Sayd al-Khātir, p440.

②.....Tadhkirat ul- Huffāz.

does he lose thereby the taste of this world but also deprive himself of reward in the next world. In spite of strong evidence he is helpless".

Death:-

After spending an active preacher's sincere life, he died when he was ninety years old, on the night of Friday on 12th Ramadān 597 AH, between maghrib and ishā in Baghdad. He was given bath at the time of tahajjud and, in the morning, all the people of Baghdad participated in his funeral. It was the biggest funeral in history. They took the body in the morning and reached the grave at the time of Friday prayers and he was buried near the grave of Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal رحمه الله عليه at Bāb ul Harb.

When he was dying, he had these words on his lips:

يا كثير العفو عمن كثر الذنب لديه

(O you who forgive much - him
who has many sins on him.)

جاءك المذنب يرجو الصفح عن جرم يديه

(The sinner comes to you hoping
for forgiveness for the crime on his hand)

انا ضيف و جزاء ، الضيف احسان اليه

(I am a guest and the treatment
of the guest is kindness to him)

May Allah be very merciful to him and admit him to paradise and give him an elevated place at Firdaws. And may He enable us to benefit from the knowledge of Ibn Jawzi رحمه الله عليه.

His teachers:-

Ibn Jawzi رحمه الله عليه wrote a separate book on his teachers. He has named and spoken on about eighty-nine teachers. He chose the best of the ulamā of that time. He spoke on how he chose his teachers after his childhood teacher Ibn Nāsir who had taken him to other prominent teachers. He said "When the mind to seek knowledge and understand developed in me, I preferred men of understanding to mere narrators. I aim not at a large number of ahādith but at understanding

and comprehending them.

Names of the honourable teachers:-

(1).....Abū Bakr Muhammad ibn Abdul Baqi ibn Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn Abdur Rahmān ibn Rabi' ibn Thābit. His line of descent is traced upto Ka'b ibn Maalik رحمه الله. He was very reliable and learned particularly in the laws of inheritance. He was arrested by the Romans who forced him to renounce Islam, but he did not do so. He died in 535AH.

(2).....Abū Bakr Muhammad ibn al-Hassān ibn Ali ibn Ibrāhim رحمه الله عليه, known as al-Mazra'i. He died in 527 AH. ①

(3).....Abul Hassan Ali ibn Abdul Wāhid ad-Dinori رحمه الله عليه was one of his earlier teachers. He resided in western Baghdad at Bāb ul-Bushrah. He died in Jamadi uth-Thani 521 AH.

(4).....Abul Fath Abdul Maalik ibn Abul Qāsim al-karokhi رحمه الله عليه. He was a righteous, truthful man to whom Ibn Jawzi رحمه الله عليه repeated his earlier teacher's ahadith. He migrated to Makkah and died there in Dhul Hajjah 548 AH.

(5).....Abū Sa'eed Ahmed ibn Muhammad ibn al-Hassan ibn Ali al-Baghdadi. He was well-mannered and straight forward. He was born in Isbahan and died in Nahawand in 540 AH.

The well-known students:-

Some great and selected people had chosen him as their teacher. They learnt from him and turned out to be leaders and imāms in their fields, and emulated him in writing and in benefitting other people, Some of them are:

(1).....Hāfiz Abdul Ghani Abdul Wahid ibn Ali ibn Sarwar رحمه الله عليه. He was born in 541AH in Neblus. He studied in Sikandariyah, Mosul, Damascus and Hamdan. He studied from Ibn Jawzi رحمه الله عليه in Baghdad. He wrote many books. Yusuf ibn Khalil رحمه الله عليه praised him. He died in Egypt in 600 AH. ②

①..... Nashikha Ibn Jawzi, p66.

②..... Al Takmalah li Wafyat an-Naqalah v 4 p778., adh-Dhil, Ibn Rajab v 2 p34.

(2).....Yusuf ibn Faghali ibn Abdullah Abul Muzaffar, the grandson of Ibn Jawzi رحمه الله عليه. He also studied from Abul Farāj ibn Kulayb رحمه الله عليه and others. He also went to Mosul and Damascus for studies of hadith and other sciences. He wrote many books. He died on 11th Dhul Hajjah 654 AH on the night of Tuesday.❶

(3).....Ahmad ibn Abdud-Dā'im ibn Ni'matul Kitāb. He was born in Neblus in 575 AH. He stayed in Baghdad. He also studied in Damascus and Hirān. He possessed an excellent character and handsome features. He was very religious and humble. He narrated ahādith for more than fifty years. He followed in the footsteps of his teacher and wrote many very valuable books. He was the imām and teacher of eminent shaykhs and imāms, like Shaykh Muhyuddin Nawawi, Shamsuddin ibn Umar, Taqiuddin Daqiq ibn ul-Eed, Taqiuddin ibn Taymiyah. He died in 668 AH.❷

Books and compilations:-

Ibn Jawzi رحمه الله عليه is no more with us with his soul and body. But his memory the fruits of his relentless efforts are alive in the pages of history. A poet said:

الجاهلون فما تو اقبل موتهم والعالمون وان ماتوا فاحياء

(The ignorant are dead before their death

But the scholars are alive even after death.)

The historians are wonderstruck on seeing his works. Ibn Tamiyah رحمه الله عليه wrote in his Ajubah al-Misriyah that Ibn Jawzi's رحمه الله عليه work surpass one thousand.❸

Dhahabi رحمه الله عليه said, "I think that no scholar has written as many books as Ibn Jawzi رحمه الله عليه."

The author of al-Bidāyah wa an-Nihayah praised him as unique in learning. He possessed knowledge of many sciences. His works exceeded three hundred, and he wrote

❶—Taj ut Tarājim p83.

❷—Ad-Dhil, Ibn Rajab v 2 p 278, Tadh Lirat ul Huffaz 1098.

❸—Ad-Dhil, v 1 p 415.

more than two hundred books in his own hand. He was perfect in every science, like tafsir, hadith, fiqh, history, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, grammar and language. He wrote on each of these subjects. Some of his important books are: Zād ul-Masir on tafsir, Jami'ul-Masānid on hadith and Al-Muntazim fi Tārrikh ul-Umam min al-Arab wa al-Ajam in twenty volumes.

Worth of time:-

He esteemed the time on hand. He used it judiciously. How he saved time, how he dealt with guests and with the (sudden) arrival of people with no purpose. He wrote in Sayd ul-Khātir (v1 pp46, 201, v2 pp318-9, v3 p616) that man must value his time. He must not waste even a moment but use every second as a means of getting him Divine reward. He must from a sincere intention in every saying and deed. It is the Prophet ﷺ has said:

نية المؤمن خير من عمله

(The intention of the believer is better than his deed).

Our righteous predecessors saved every moment of their lives. For example, when some one requested the well-known tabi'ī, Aamir ibn Abd Qays, to talk to him, he replied, "Stop the sun!"

People waste their time in surprising way. In the night, the gossip or read fiction, or sleep long, and during the day, they roam in the markets or places of entertainment. They are like travellers in a ship that takes them to an unknown destination while they converse with each other. Very few people value time and know the objective of life, Life is a valuable asset. Use it before, it passes away. Make it of value. (He wrote further:)

I seek refuge in Allah from the unoccupied people. Many of them try to waste time with me too, terming that 'a visit' or 'a service', and ask to be allowed to sit with me. Then they begin to talk with no purpose, during which they also backbite other people. This is our common practice

particularly on festivals. They visit each other and do not stop at greeting but indulge in gossip. Time is the most precious asset. We must employ it in piety and it is fard to do so, and foolish to waste it. I try to keep away from people, but complete indifference is not possible. When it is necessary to meet them, I try to cut down conversation. I found out something that I could do during conversation, like preparing my writing material-whatever could be done while talking to others. Most of the people are simply unaware of the aim of life. Some of them do not need to work for a livelihood because Allah has bestowed on them abundant wealth, but they waste their time in the markets. As a result, they perpetrate the prohibited things too. Some people waste their time mercilessly in play, or in gossip, or on a futile discussion of market trends. Thus, Allah has not granted to everyone the wealth of realising the worth of time. It is only His grant and very few esteem it.

وَمَا يُلْقَاهَا إِلَّا ذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ

{And none will attain this save one of mighty fortune.}(41:35)

May Allah cause us to realise the worth of time and to regard it as blessing.

Our worthy predecessors never wasted time. Fudayl ibn Iyad رحمه الله عليه said, "I know such people who keep a record of every thing they do between two Fridays." When some people visited a saintly man, they pleaded, "Perhaps, we have interrupted you in your busy life." He said, "The truth is that I was reciting the Qur'an which I had to stop for you." Another man of Allah visited Sari Saqati رحمه الله عليه and found a circle of men surrounding him. So, he did not stay there but returned, Saying, "You have become a haunt of unoccupied people!". If one is polite to the visitor then he will sit long and this will take its toll of one's time.

If people prolonged their sitting with Maruf Karkhi رحمه الله عليه, he would comment, "The angel over the sun is never slow in getting it to revolve. When do you people intend to go?"

Dawūd Tā'i رحمه الله عليه used to chew powdered meal instead of eating bread, saying that this let him recite fifty verses more (by saving time). Uthmān al-Bagalāwi رحمه الله عليه was perpetually engaged in dhikr. He used to say that when he ate bread at the time of iftar, he had to pause dhikr and that seemed as though he was short of breath. Some teachers advised their students that when they dispersed after class, they must walk in solitude so that they might recite the Qur'an rather than talk to each other and waste precious time.

Not a moment must be lost. See the Prophet ﷺ said:

من قال سبحان الله العظيم وبحمده غرست له بها نخلة في الجنة

(If anyone says { سبحان الله العظيم وبحمده } then a palm tree is planted for him in Paradise.)

Ponder over it ! Man, through sheer negligence, loses a mighty opportunity to earn reward. Life is like a field. If one seed is sowed, the return accrued will be thousand time over that. No sensible person can be neglectful of this opportunity. Time can be best utilised by concentrating, observing solitude, reducing on socialising and eating less. Sometimes, overeating brings about sleepiness. If you examine the life of pious predecessors and are convinced of the hereafter then you will agree with me.

The earlier ulamā were determined. Their lives and their writings bear that out. But most of their works are lost because the succeeding students lacked determination. They found them lengthy and could not derive benefit from them whereafter they felt content with lessons in the classroom. Perfection in knowledge is possible in only one way to study those books. That will create determination and an awareness in the heart and an urge to work hard. In my times, I always found the predecessors very determined and strong-willed. So, bind yourselves to study their lives and books and do it with dedication. A poet has said:

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مَنْ قَالَ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ غُرِمَتْ لَهُ بِهَا نَخْلَةٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ

(If anyone says | سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ | then a palm tree is planted for him in Paradise.)

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فلعلی اری الدیار بسمعی

فاتنی ان اری الدیار بطرفی

(Come to me that I may see the

homes with my eyes

Perhaps I may see the homes

with my ears!)

I am never satiated with books. If I come across a new book than I feel that I have found a large treasure. I looked at the catalogue of books in Madrasah Nizāmiyah which has six thousand books of Abū Hanifa رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ, Humyadi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ, Muhammad Fatūh Andlasi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ, Abdul Wahāb al-Anmāti رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ, Ibn Nāsir رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ and Abū Muhammad رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ. There were other books too all of which I read. It will not be an exaggeration if I say that I studied twenty thousand books, and I still look out for more books. I realised that they were strong-willed, protectors of religion and worship and possessed perfect knowledge. Thereafter, I found that my contemporaries had a weaker determination than I. Praise belongs to Allah.

Ibn Rajab رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ wrote in Dhil Tabaqāt ul-Hanābilah (v1 pp 412,413) that Ibn Jawzi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ wrote on every subject. His books exceeded three hundred and forty, some made up of twenty volumes.

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Abdul Hamid al-Aluji al-Iraqi wrote a book Mu'alifāt Ibn Jawzi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ published in 1385AH by Iraq's Ministry of Culture. It enumerates 519 of his books, the larger ones of twenty volumes each and the smaller comprising many pages. The introduction quotes Ibn Taymiyah's رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ book Ajubah al-Misriyah that Ibn Jawzi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ wrote more than a thousand books.

A brief look into the book's subject

'Disobedience & Sins'

Sin is the cause of negligence which harden the heart. And hardness of heart deprive's one of Allah's mercy which means that punishment is not averted. So, we pray to Allah to pardon and forgive us and to give us security. Only the living ponder over such things while those hearts that are dead plunge themselves in temporal things and wordly pleasures.

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyah رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ has enumerated the harm of sins in detail in his book Ad-Dā' wa ad-Dawā (Al-Jawab al-Kāfi). He has compared the disadvantages of committing sin with the advantages of abstaining from sin. Every intelligent person should be encouraged and prompted thereby to shun sin and to adopt piety that which leads to it. Let us hear and read his discourse with an open mind, understand it with our intelligence, and resolve with a devoted heart to abide by it. May Allah help us Aameen.

Repercussions of sins:-

Some of the repercussions of sin are: diminished enablement to perform pious deeds, corruption of opinion, inability to see the truth, adulteration of the heart, failing to remember Allah, wasting time, dislike of other creatures, dread of the Lord, not getting answer to supplication, hardness of heart, lack of blessing in provision and life, companionship of evil people, prolonged grief and sorrow,

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straitened livelihood. These things result from neglect of dhikr and commission of sin. It is like produce of herbage with water and like burning from fire.

And their opposites produces: correct opinion, clear vision of truth, love for the Lord, grant of supplication, tenderness of heart, blessing in provision and productivity of time, company of the pious, a lively heart, abundance of livelihood. These things results from obedience and piety.

The sins of the sinners cause earthquakes, darkness above, insecurity on land and sea, withdrawal of blessing, lessening of pious deeds and a life of captivity. Hence, buy your soul today. The bargain is on and it is inexpensive. The merchandise is available. But-otherwise-there will be a day when no price will be paid.

Allah says:

ذَلِكَ يَوْمُ التَّغَابُنِ

{That shall be the day of mutual loss and gain.}(64 : 9)

يَوْمَ يَعْضُ الظَّالِمُ عَلَى يَدَيْهِ

{On that day the evil doer shall bite his hands...} (25 :27)

Perhaps we may quote a poet acknowledge **this facts:**

اذا انت لم ترحل بزاد من التقى وابصرت يوم الحشر من قد تزودا
ندمت على ان لا تكون كمثله وانك لم ترصد كما كان ارصدا

{If you do not go with the provision
of taqwā

And see the day of gathering - one
with the provision,

You will regret why you were
not like him

And why you did not set aside
(for yourself) as he did}

Sin obstructs provision and earning. Man is deprived of provision he would have received if he had not committed sin.

Roots of sin are three:-

There are three roots of sin

(1).....Arrogance. This is what cause downfall of Iblis.

(2).....Greed and avarice. This is what brought Adam ﷺ from Paradise.

(3).....Jealously. This is what prompted one of the son of Adam ﷺ to kill another son (his brother).

If anyone protects himself from these three things then he is safe from mischief. Disbelief grows from arrogance, disobedience from greed, and oppression, rebellion and unruliness from jeasously. Some people wrote to Umar ﷺ asking him which of the following men was better:

(1).....He who is never troubled by desires and temptation, or,

(2).....He who is tempted but he dismisses the temptation only for Allah's sake.

Umar ﷺ replied that the second man is one of those whom Allah has chosen for taqwā and a mighty reward awaited them.

Effects of sins:-

One of the signs of sins is mentioned by Abdullah ibn Mas'ūd ﷺ that he thought that the sinner will forget what he has learnt.

Mullā Ali Qārī ﷺ wrote in Tabaqāt al-Hanafiyah (v2 p487) that whenever Abū Hanifa رَحِمَهُ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ found it difficult to arrive at some religious verdict or understand an issue, he would say to his students, "This is cause by the sin of mine." And, he would seek forgiveness of Allah. Sometime, he stood up in salāh and got the answer after which he would say, "I hope that my sin is forgiven." When Fudayl ibn Iyad رَحِمَهُ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ learnt of it, he wept much and said, "This is because of his few sins, otherwise no one is told of it." Ibn Hajar رَحِمَهُ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ wrote in Tadhīb ut-Tahdhib(v11 p129) about Waki' ibn Jarrah رَحِمَهُ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ Kufi that he was one of the great scholars and

by nature a saintly person. Ali ibn Khashram رحمه الله عليه said that he never saw a book in the hand of Waki', but he remembered all the ahādith. Ali رحمه الله عليه asked him what was behind his strong memory and he said, "The method and treatment is merely giving up sin." There is no better medicine for strong medicine than giving up sin. He also said, "Hard heartedness and keeping away from Allah are the severest form of punishment." Hearts turn hard and unyielding from four things: Meeting people for no valid reason, to sleep more than necessary, to talk with out reason, and to overeat.

It is much easier to save oneself from evil desires than to go by them and destroy oneself. The reason is clear : if one goes by one's lustful desire then one gets entangled in hardship and punishment or loses a more perfect pleasure, or wastes much time which cause regret, or earns a bad name, or loses wealth or a precious blessing , or an unworthy man gets an opportunity to deride him, or grief overtakes him, or some valuable knowledge goes off the mind, or makes an enemy happy and displeases a friend, or deprives oneself of a bounty, or smears one's character with an indelible blot. In contrast , pious deeds grow good qualities and excellent character - سبحانه الله رب العالمين (Allah, Lord of the worlds is without blemish.)

The least that one gets by abstaining from sin include: honour is maintained, respect and wealth are retained, love of others grows, provision is enlarged, body is comfortable, heart is strong, soul is content, chest is enlarged there is peace from evil grief is diminished, light of heart is preserved, there is no mental agony, provision is enlarged, ability to righteousness multiplies, learning and knowledge increases, other people acknowledge one's fame, feature command respect, people rush to help and support, prayers are answered, there is love for Allah and nearness to the angels and a riddance from devils, people vie with each other to help, one is prepared for death and eager to see

Allah, a realisation of the futility of the world and importance of the hereafter with an urge to get it, a pleasure from good deeds, there is a strong savour of faith, eligibility for prayers of the bearers of the throne, pleasure of the recording -angels is earned and there is an increase of faith and understanding and divine awareness. Also he earns Allah's love and gets pleasure from repentance for sin.

These are a few of the worldly fruits of giving up sin. When this person dies, the angels convey glad tidings of Paradise and proclaim:

أَنْ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

{....that no fear shall be on them, nor shall they grieve.} (3 : 170)

He will come out of the worldly cell into the gardens of Paradise and, while other people face severe heat, and perspire profusely, he will be under Allah's mercy. He will join the friends of Allah.

وَذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ

{That is the bounty of Allah which He gives to whom He wills. And Allah is of infinite bounty.}(57:21)

Ibn Qayyim رحمه الله عليه has also enumerated the evil effects of sin in his Al-Jawab al-Kafi. Only the captions are reproduced here: loss of knowledge and provision, removal from Allah's proximity, difficulty in all affairs, darkness on the face, darkness in the grave, weakness of the heart and body, inclination of disobey, deprivation of blessing in the life, plunging into more evil, weakening of resolve, slackness in prayer to Allah, loss of sense of sin, falling into disgrace, failing intelligence, eligibility of Prophet's ﷺ curse, becoming entitled to punishment in the barzakh, corruption on land and sea, loss of modesty, losing sense of Allah's majesty, lack of insight and being subjected to sudden fear.

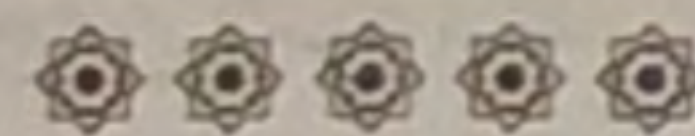
The sinner is a constant prisoner of the devil. Thus, he falls into disgrace.

In short every harm and calamity of the world and the hereafter that can fall on a body and heart is the outcome of

sin. Everything enumerated in this discourse perpetual obstacle to success. We are weak and fall into sin, so we need to wash them off by submitting ourselves to sermons and admonition. We must repent. Ibn Jawzi رحمه الله عليه has delivered one such sermon in Sayd ul Khatir: " Keeps away from sin, save yourself from sin because the result of sin is very bad---- particularly sin is seclusion. It is like challenging Allah and disgrace the sinner in His sight....."

Shaykh Mustafā Sā'i wrote Hākadha alamatni al-hayā (p32):

"When you get the urge to sin, remind yourself of the dangers. If that fails, think of the manners of the people. If that fail, remembers the disgrace awaits you. If that also fails then know that you are outside the orbit of humanity and into the beastly atmosphere, like a beast in the human form."



The punishment to which the previous peoples were subjected because of their sins

Mankind has inhabited the earth for a long time. People have succeeded each other for generations. To every people, Allah has been merciful by sending His Prophets عليهم السلام to guide them and the pious answered their call cheerfully, but the wretched rejected them. This clash between truth and falsehood has been there since time immemorial. Allah has been punishing the wicked right here in the world.

1.....The flood:-

The people of prophet Nuh عليه السلام were subjected to this punishment. Allah says:

كَذَبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ فَكَذَّبُوا عَبْدَنَا وَقَالُوا مَجْنُونٌ وَازْدَجَرَ ۖ فَدَعَا رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَغْلُوبٌ فَانْتَصِرْ ۖ فَفَتَحْنَا أَبْوَابَ السَّمَاءِ بِمَاءٍ مُنْهَمِرٍ ۖ وَفَجَّرْنَا الْأَرْضَ عُيُونًا فَالْتَقَى الْمَاءُ عَلَى أَمْرٍ قَدْ قُدِرَ ۖ (القمر: ٩-١٢) (Surah, al-Qamar 54:9-12)

2.....The blighting wind:-

The people of Prophet Hud عليه السلام suffered this punishment. Allah says:

وَفِي عَادٍ إِذْ أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الرِّيحَ الْعَقِيمَ مَا تَلْزَمُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ أَتَتْ عَلَيْهِ إِلَّا جَعَلَتْهُ كَالرِّيمِ ۖ (الناريات: ٤١) (Adh-Dhariyat, 51:41)

3.....The thunder bolt:-

The people of Prophet Salih عليه السلام underwent this punishment. Allah says:

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ صَيْحَةً وَاحِدَةً فَكَانُوا كَهَشِيمٍ الْمُخْتَظِرِ ۖ (القمر: ٣١) (Al-Qamar, 54:31)

4.....Rain of stones:-

This punishment was given to the people of Prophet Lūt عليه السلام. Allah says:

وَلَوْ طَا إِذْقَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ أَتَأْتُونَ الْفَحِشَةَ مَا سَبَقَكُمْ بِهَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ (١) إِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ الرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِنْ دُونِ النِّسَاءِ ۚ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ مُّسْرِفُونَ ۖ

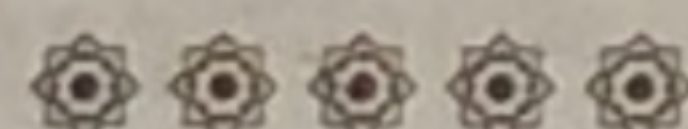
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When they were persisted they were punished as Allah says:

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When they were persisted they were punished as Allah says:

فَلَمَّا جَاءَ أَمْرُنَا جَعَلْنَا عَالِيَهَا سَافِلَهَا وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهَا حِجَارَةً مِّن سِجِّيلٍ
مَّنْضُودٍ ۝

5.....Flood , locust, vermin, frog , blood:-

The Fir'awn and his men received this punishment. Allah says:

فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الطُّوفَانَ وَالْجَرَادَ وَالْقُمَّلَ وَالضَّفَادِعَ وَالدَّمَ آيَاتٍ مُّفَصَّلَاتٍ
فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا وَكَانُوا قَوْمًا مُّجْرِمِينَ ۝ (الاعراف: ١٣٣) (Al-A'raf 7:133)

6.....Different sickness and trials:-

People who stray from the right path are punished in different ways. Sexual diseases affect those who commit the general sins of the disbelievers. Moral bankruptcy, slaying, shamelessness, robbery and theft, alcoholism and addiction and crime have taken over the society. The main cause of this is the free mixing of boys and girls. According to statistics released in the USA : everyday

- ☆ 11,253 drug-addicts are nabbed,
- ☆ 180 women are kidnapped,
- ☆ 153 people are murdered,
- ☆ 2,618 cars are hijacked,
- ☆ 1,282 illegitimate childrens are born,
- ☆ 5,962 marriages are solminised,
- ☆ 2,986 divorce takes place,
- ☆ 90 billion bottles of wine are consumed
- ☆ 2,740 childrens run away from their homes,
- ☆ 2,740 minor girls become pregnant through adultery,
- ☆ 3,231 miscarriages occur,
- ☆ and 1,68,493 people suffer from incurable diseases.

The other countries do not lag behind. Their mind is blocked and they walk in the footsteps of the devil. They have turned away from remembrance of Allah, and Allah says of them:

وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَنْ ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا ۚ (TāHā, 20:124)

The filthy deed of the people of Lūt عليه السلام and adultery is now common both in the west and east. It is done in public and pursued as a habbit. Furthermore, it is done under the aegis of the law. How true is the saying of the Prophet ﷺ.

خمس اذا ابتليتكم بهن واعوذ بالله تتركهن ولم تظهر الفاحشة في قوم قط
حتى يعلنوها ، الافشائهم الطاعون الاوجاع التي لم تكم مصنت في
اسلام فهم الذين مصنوا-

He also said (When evil spreads on earth, Allah sends down His punishment to its people.)

When mankind strayed from guidance and threw manners and excellences overboard, they invited difficulties on themselves. They became eligible for Allah's punishment. A poet speaks it very well:

ان الذى افنى الاولائل قادر ان يهلك الباقين وهو مجيد

[He addresses the people of Aad and Taba' and says that the ignorant and stones are fuel of hell. And he appeals to the people to wakeup before death overtakes them, for, He who made the earlier ones extinct can let the remaining ones have the same fate. Indeed, He is Exalted.]

Allah says:

سُنَّةَ اللَّهِ فِي الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِن قَبْلُ وَلَكِنْ تَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا ۚ (الاحزاب: ٦٢)
(Al-Ahzab, 33:62)

Kinds of sins:-

Man possess a variety of attributes, But, four of them prompt him to perpetrate sin. They are:

1).....Sifat Malakutiyah (dominantly quality), It makes man arrogant and proud . He becomes egoistic and loves to boast and be in limelight. This is very dangerous sin that destroys the wrong doer. But some people do not regard it as a sin.

2).....Sifat Shatāniyah (devilish quality). This is at the root of jealousy, rebellion, conspiracy, deception, hypocrisy, etc.

3).....Sifat Bahimah (animal instinct). It is a mischievous quality whose possess craves for sexual satisfaction and has a deep sexual appetite. He is inclined to adultery, homosexuality, theft, and so on.

فَلَمَّا جَاءَ أَمْرُنَا جَعَلْنَا عَالِيَهَا سَافِلَهَا وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهَا حِجَارَةً مِّن سِجِّيلٍ
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4).....Sifat Sabiyah (beastly quality). There is a beastly wildness-anger and restlessness and plunder.

The traits of animals are the first to appear followed by the beastly qualities. The devilish quality displays itself after that and the angelic quality also appears. These four qualities are the root cause of sins and their source. Then sins spread on the person of the sinner. Some of them are inside the heart, like disbelief, bidah, hypocrisy. Some are committed by the eyes, the ears, the tongue, the private parts, the hands or the feet. Then there are rights and they are of two kinds - rights of Allah and rights of fellow men.

As far as rights of other people are concerned, this is very serious matter. But, of Allah's rights, one may hope to be forgiven every violation except associating with Him. (Sayyidah) Aysha رضى الله تعالى عنها narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "There are three registers with Allah, Mighty and Glorious, one to which He will pay no attention, one to which He will leave nothing unconsidered and one which He will not forgive."^①

What He will not forgive is association of a partner with Him. He says:

إِنَّهُ مَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ (Al-Ma'idah, 5:72)

That which He will overlook are His rights. He will forgive them. And the register of which He will spare nothing is about rights of other men.

Second kind of sin:-

Sins are of two kinds: minor and major. There are different ahādith about the number of the major sins. we present five of them.

1).....Abū Hurayrah رضى الله تعالى عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

اجتنبوا السبع الموبقات، قالوا: يا رسول الله! وما هن؟ قال: الشرك بالله
والسحر وقتل النفس التي حرم الله إلا بالحق، واكل الربا واكل مال اليتيم
والتولى يوم الزحف وقذف المحصنات المؤمنات الغافلات۔

① — Ahmad 6/240.

"Avoid the seven that destroy ". The saḥābah رضى الله تعالى عنهم asked, "O Messenger of Allah, what are they?", He said, "Associating any thing with Allah, sorcery, slaying without reason one whom Allah has made sacred, consuming interest, devouring wealth of the orphans, running away from the battlefield and slandering a chaste woman who is unaware."

2).....Abdullah ibn Mas'ūd رضى الله تعالى عنه narrated that the someone asked the Prophet ﷺ about the greatest sin. He said, "To associate something with Allah." He was asked, "What is next?" He said, "To kill one's child out of fear of poverty." Again He was asked about the next sin in magnitude, and he said, "To commit adultery with one's neighbour's wife."

3).....Abdullah ibn Umar رضى الله تعالى عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said that the major sins are to associate anything with Allah and to disobey the parents.

4).....The Prophet ﷺ asked, "Shall I not inform about the most major sin? To lie" Or he said, "To give a false testimony."

5).....Abū Bakr رضى الله تعالى عنه narrated that the major sins were mentioned in the Prophets ﷺ presence. He said, "To set a partner with Allah, to disobey the parents." He was reclining, but, suddenly, sat straight and said, "Listen, beware ! To lie and to give false testimony." He repeated these words again and again, so that they wished that he should stop repeating.

The ulamā differ on the definition of the major sins. The hadith does not define it perhaps because the people may cautious and keep away from the sins altogether. However, the hadith does describe the kind of major sins and the greatest sin. The ulamā also differ on the number of kabā'ir (major sins). Thus, Abdullah ibn Mas'ūd رضى الله تعالى عنه said that they are four, Ibn Umar رضى الله تعالى عنه said that they are seven and when Ibn Abbās رضى الله تعالى عنه heard of it he said, "Between seven and seventy."

Abū Salih رضى الله تعالى عنه reported that Ibn Abbās رضى الله تعالى عنه said that every sin is major if Shari'ah has prescribed a punishment for it. Ibn Abbās رضى الله تعالى عنه said that from the beginning of surah an-Nisā to its verse 31 are all kabā'ir.

Sa'eed ibn Jubayr رحمه الله عليه said that every sin whose punishment is (consignment to) hell is a major sin. And Abū Talib رحمه الله said, "The kabā'ir are seventeen in number. I have counted them from ahādith . Four of them relate to the heart: association with Allah, insistence on minor sins, despair of Allah's mercy and disregard for Allah's punishment. Four of them relate to the tongue: false testimony, accusing a chaste woman, false oath and sorcery. Three relate to the belly: consuming wine, devouring the property of an orphan wrongly, consuming interest. Two concern the private parts: adultery and homosexuality. And one relates to the whole person and it is disobedience to parents."

Now , I end this introduction and come to the book itself. I have selected all subjects from ibn Jawzi's رحمه الله عليه book Sayd ul-Khatir . He has written much about sin. I kept jotting down the effects of sin till it turned out to be a separate book. May Allah approve it and keep us away from sin, both minor and major, because no one is there besides Allah Who may save us from sins.

سبحانك اللهم وبحمدك اشهد ان لا اله الا انت استغفرك واتوب اليك

Ibrahi ibn Abdullah
Hāzmi
(Riyadh)

Habit of the masses:-

When one ponders over the problems and calamities that beset the people in the world, one wonders why is it so knowing that Allah is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy. I observe that the being of most of the people is immaterial, for, they never concentrate on Divine Unity, Allah's commands to do and to abstain. They survive like animals. If they find the commands suitable to them they observe them, otherwise they ignore them.^① They are only interested in money without worrying where it comes from, lawfully or un-lawfully . If it is convenient, they offer the

① This is Ibn Jawzi's observation during his times when everyone, the common people and the leaders all are like that.

salāh, otherwise they omit it. Some of them perpetrate sin openly in spite of knowing the prohibition. Sometimes, though they are able to avoid it, they do not refrain from sin. Thus, though these punishment, calamities, trials are very severe yet they are lighter than the crime and wrong doings. When a punishment strikes someone to wipe off his sin, he complains, "For what sin am I being punished?" He forgets the wrong he has done. sometimes, an old man undergoes a trial and hardship, such that other people pity him, but they do not know that as a young man he had violated Allah's rights. When you see anyone in a difficulty, understand that he is being punished for a sin.

Ulamā of the world and of the hereafter:-

When I thought about the jealousy of the ulama for each other, I realised behind it is their love for the world because the ulama of the hereafter must love each other. It is as Allah says: {وَلَا يَحْدُونُ فِيْ صُدُوْرِهِمْ حَاجَةٌ مِّمَّا أُوتُوا} (al-Hashr, 59:9) and {وَالَّذِيْنَ جَاءُوا مِنْۢ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُوْنَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا} (59:10) {بِالْإِيْمَانِ وَلَا تَحْمِلْ فِيْ قُلُوْبِنَا غِلًا لِلَّذِيْنَ آمَنُوا} - (الحشر: 8)

Abū Dardā رحمه الله used to pray every night for a group of Muslims. And, Ibn Hanbal رحمه الله disclosed to the son of Shāfi'i , "Your father is one of those for whom I Pray at the time of tahajjud every night."

The difference between these two kinds of ulamā is that those with a worldly bent have their eyes on materials possessions, name and status while those with the next world in their minds keep far away from these things. They pity anyone who is involved in such things .

Ibrāhim Nakha'i رحمه الله was so much of an ascetic that he never reclined against a pillar and he disliked fame. Alqamah رحمه الله said, "I do not like that anyone should follow me and point me out to others," Alqamah!"" Some were such that if a couple of people gathered around them, they disappeared. They liked to be unknown and they prayed for each other. Perhaps they are members of caravan, together on a journey , the halts of day and nights which they overtake to travel to Paradise.

Sa'eed ibn Jubayr رحمه الله عليه said that every sin whose punishment is (consignment to) hell is a major sin. And Abū Talib رحمه الله عليه said, "The kabā'ir are seventeen in number. I have counted them from ahādith . Four of them relate to the heart: association with Allah, insistence on minor sins, despair of Allah's mercy and disregard for Allah's punishment. Four of them relate to the tongue: false testimony, accusing a chaste woman, false oath and sorcery. Three relate to the belly: consuming wine, devouring the property of an orphan wrongly, consuming interest. Two concern the private parts: adultery and homosexuality. And one relates to the whole person and it is disobedience to parents."

Now , I end this introduction and come to the book itself. I have selected all subjects from ibn Jawzi's رحمه الله عليه book Sayd ul-Khatir . He has written much about sin. I kept jotting down the effects of sin till it turned out to be a separate book. May Allah approve it and keep us away from sin, both minor and major, because no one is there besides Allah Who may save us from sins.

سبحانك اللهم وبحمدك اشهد ان لا اله الا انت استغفرك واتوب اليك

Ibrahi ibn Abdullah
Hāzmi
(Riyadh)

Habit of the masses:-

When one ponders over the problems and calamities that beset the people in the world, one wonders why is it so knowing that Allah is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy. I observe that the being of most of the people is immaterial, for, they never concentrate on Divine Unity, Allah's commands to do and to abstain. They survive like animals. If they find the commands suitable to them they observe them, otherwise they ignore them.^① They are only interested in money without worrying where it comes from, lawfully or un-lawfully . If it is convenient, they offer the

① This is Ibn Jawzi's observation during his times when everyone, the common people and the leaders all are like that.

salāh, otherwise they omit it. Some of them perpetrate sin openly in spite of knowing the prohibition. Sometimes, though they are able to avoid it, they do not refrain from sin. Thus, though these punishment, calamities, trials are very severe yet they are lighter than the crime and wrong doings. When a punishment strikes someone to wipe off his sin, he complains, "For what sin am I being punished?" He forgets the wrong he has done. sometimes, an old man undergoes a trial and hardship, such that other people pity him, but they do not know that as a young man he had violated Allah's rights. When you see anyone in a difficulty, understand that he is being punished for a sin.

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Life of the pious:-

If anyone wants to correct his state of life then he must rectify his deeds. Allah says in surah al-Jinn وَأَنْ لَّوِ اسْتَقَامُوا عَلَى الطَّرِيقَةِ لَأَسْقَيْنَهُمْ مَاءً غَدَقًا (72:16).

The Prophet ﷺ narrated a hadith Qudsi that Allah says, "If My slaves make it a point to obey Me then they will have rain at night and bright sunlight during day. They will not hear the thunderbolt."

The Prophet ﷺ also said, "Never does piety become stale, nor evil remain fresh. He who submits to retaliation is always alive." Hence, you will reap as you sow.

Abu Sulaymān Dārānī رحمه الله عليه said, "If anyone keeps his affairs correct then he will be treated correctly, If he does piety by night then he will get His return during the day." He went to the people and told them that he who likes perpetual security must fear Allah. Fudayl ibn Iyād رحمه الله عليه said, "I clearly see the effect of my sin in my female slave or my riding beast."

Whenever you find a reversal in your affairs, know that you have been lax in being grateful for the bounties you enjoy or you have committed a sin. So try to avoid ingratitude for blessing and sudden punishment. Do not take Allah's clemency as an excuse for your laxity.

Blunders:-

Those ulamā who pursue illegal desires and perpetrate the disallowed are of many kinds.

- 1).....They who are ignorant for the prohibition.
- 2).....They who do not regard the prohibited as unlawful but term it as disliked.
- 3).....Some are aware that it is unlawful but their base desires prevail and they overlook the prohibition. This is why the thief forgets that hands could be severed, the adulterer does not remember the disgrace and stoning awaiting him.
- 4).....Sometimes a sin is perpetrated even after it is known to be a sin and prohibited. The sinner does not use his mind and it is even wrong for a thief to tell himself that he steals

lesser than what calls for amputation of his hands. A moment's pleasure can have the whole body stoned and sins have had a whole lot of people swallowed in earth, faces have been changed completely and some disappeared in the seas.

When the heart is lifeless:-

Everything that Allah has created in this world is on the pattern of the hereafter but they surely are different intrinsically. Abdullah ibn Abbās رضي الله عنه said that there is only a similarity of names in Paradise for worldly things because Allah has given the blessing in this world to create a longing for the bounties of the next world and the punishment in this life is to warn against the punishment of the hereafter. Thus, every tyrant will be punished before his death for his oppression and every sinner for his sin. This is what this verse means (an-Nisā, 4:123) {مَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا يُجْزَ بِهِ}

Sometimes a sinner who is healthy and wealthy imagines that he is immune from punishment. But, he is undergoing punishment though he does not realise it. The wise people say that if a second sin is committed after the first then it is a punishment for the first sin. Similarly, to do second pious deed on the heels of a pious deed is a reward for the first performance. Sometimes the punishment is implied as is related of a scholar of Banū Isrā'il. He said to Allah, "O Lord, how many times have I disobeyed you but you have not punished me!". He heard a voice said, "How many times were you punished but you never perceived it. Did I not deprive you of the sweetness of supplication?". If anyone ponders over it then he will see the facts.

Someone asked Wahb ibn al-Ward رحمه الله عليه, "Will a sinner perceive the sweet taste of obedience?" He said, "A sinner apart, even one who intends to commit a sin will be deprived of the savour of obedience. He who slackens the bridle of vision loses insight and he who fails to check his tongue is deprived of the clarity of his heart. He who fills his belly with the doubtful food, darkens his inward side, is deprived of ability to worship in the night and to savour the delight of supplication." Only they realise these things as punishment who takes an account of their self from time to

time. In this way, the return for pious deeds and taqwā is received promptly. The Prophet ﷺ said, "The look at a female stranger is one of the poisonous arrows of the devil. If anyone keeps his sight away only for the sake of Allah then He will grant him a faith whose sweetness he will feel in his heart." This is glimpse at the hidden reward for a pious deed.

Also few people understand the outward punishment as well as reward. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Sleeping in the morning prevents receipts of provision."^① He also said that a person is deprived of provision because of the sins he commits.^②

Uthmān Naysāpuri رحمه الله عليه was going for this Friday prayers when his shoe laces snapped. He began to rearrange them and said, "This has happened because I did not have a bath for the Friday salāh."

A strange example of punishment in the world for the wrong doing is evident in the case of brothers of Prophet Yūsuf عليه السلام. They were very cruel to him but were compelled to beg him for charity. Also, Prophet Yūsuf عليه السلام protected himself from the unlawful (intimacy) so Allah made the woman Zulaykhah lawful to him. And, she had falsely accused him, so she was compelled to declare his innocence. If man gives up sin only for Allah's pleasure then he will get its fruit in this very world, and so will he get reward for pious deeds.

It is like what the Prophet ﷺ said, "When you experience financial constraints, give sadaqah and do business with Allah this will increase your wealth."^③ An elderly man bought a female slave when he was young. As her owner, he felt inclined to her. He asked the scholars about it and they said that he must wait till she gets her menses. He asked her about that and she said that she was menstruating at the time he bought her. He was happy that his difficulty was over, but the scholars maintained that she must experience a

① Bayhaqi

② Bayhaqi

③ Ahmad, 5/237 Ibn Majah

menstruation after she had become his property. Though he had a terrible desire for her, he patiently waited and Allah granted him better blessing for the patience.

Reforming the inner self:-

When I pondered over the evidence of Allah's existence, I found them to be more than the particle of dust. I also observed that if anyone disobeys Allah secretly, Allah makes it known, even if at a later stage. People talk of it and sometime he has to feel ashamed before them. This is the punishment of all concealed sins. Clearly there is a Being who rewards or punishes every deed. Nothing is hidden from Him. Similarly, if anyone does a good deed secretly then it certainly comes into people's knowledge and they speak highly of him. They forget his sins. In this way, people know that Allah does not let anyone's deeds go to waste. People loves or detest anyone relative to his attachment to Allah. If he is pious then people love him, but if he is wicked then they abhor him. Their hearts are in Allah's hand. If anyone keeps his relation with other people good but neglects his relations with Allah then the tables will be turned on him and those who praise him will criticise him.

Excess of sensual desires:-

I looked into the desire of the world and concluded that they are a means of destruction. If the mind controls a person's tendencies then he is safe but if it is the opposite then he has had it. The most destructive form of desires is the sexual urge, for, there is no letting down but always an advance. The sperm will be discharged and the essence of strength is lost paving the way to an early aging process.

Next is the unending appetite. If anyone overeats than he gives an impetus to his base self. But, if anyone is undernourished then he too hurts himself.

This means that moderation must be observed in everything. It is praise worthy and commendable. Only he is successful who uses his intelligence. If you think of the hereafter in your worldly affairs then everything will be clear to you.

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This means that moderation must be observed in everything. It is praise worthy and commendable. Only he is successful who uses his intelligence. If you think of the hereafter in your worldly affairs then everything will be clear to you.

Faith and sin:-

A believer is not in sin. He detests sin and makes no resolve to do that. If he happens to fall in sin, he does not do it again. He checks his anger and before he can slip in sin, he resolves to repent. Look at the brothers of (Sayyidinā) Yūsuf عليه السلام. They decided to slay Yūsuf عليه السلام, but soon took aback-step, 'or cast him in a well', or 'on a land'. Then they first repented before doing it, 'after that become righteous.' Again, when they went towards the desert, their jealousy for Yūsuf عليه السلام was aroused and they were tempted to kill him but their elder brother persuaded them to throw him in a well, instead. He hoped that a passing caravan might take him from there. The reason for these varying thoughts was that the strength of their faith checked them as best as it could. The result was that their thoughts alternated between negligence and repentance.

Change of circumstances:-

Times are not always the same. Circumstances change. It is as Allah says: {وَتِلْكَ الْأَيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا يَبْنِي النَّاسُ}. Sometimes poverty and want afflict a person but affluence takes the place at other times. Honour and disgrace replace one other. Now friends rejoice but later it is the turn of the enemies. At all times, an intelligent person observes taqwā (righteousness) so that he knows that if he can be happy, he also has to practice patience, for, everything is ephemeral and meaningless. On the other hand, taqwā is enduring and keeps alert for him not allowing him to falter. In illness, it will comfort and in difficulty it will shield. Further it ensure blessing in the hereafter.

Consequences of sin and piety:-

If a person thinks of the consequences, he will not fall in sin. Those who are indecent perpetually, they cannot control themselves in spite of their strength. They forget the hereafter and fail to remember Allah. Either they eye the wealth of others or blame their destiny. As for those who shun indecency, they find bliss in life, and the good things if life come to them in plenty. If they are weak financially, they have the strength to submission to Allah's will and pleasures

makes them find the distasteful things of life as pleasant. This condition is aptly described in Allah's words:

{ إِنَّهُ مَنْ يَتَّقِ وَيَصْبِرْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ }

Lapse upon lapse:-

These words of Allah seem to warn the persistent sinner to look around so that he might check himself and call himself to task for the repitition and lethargy.

O you intelligent one, why do sin again and again? Think of its repercussions and do not prefer the fleeting pleasure over the ever-lasting blessing or barter the precious against the cheap. Do not choose a moment's negligence over the perpetual awareness.

Alas! You are buying regret and remorse and carrying a back-breaking weight that will bring unending tears of grief. Other people will punish you and give you bad names and ask 'Why did you not think?'

Surrendering before sin:-

Only he enjoys sin who is lost in negligence. But a believer does not enjoy sin because he sees the prohibited and unlawful. He fears punishment. If his awareness is strong then he will see the Mighty Being who forbids sins and enjoyment will become distasteful. If his mind fails then his heart takes over. Pleasure of sin lasts for a moment but the subsequent remorse is forever. In spite of hope for pardon, fear of being punished always looms overhead. And know that base desires are commensurate with the degree of negligence.

Think of the after-effects:-

A wise man tries to avoid the punishment of sin. He can not get a concession from Allah Who is just. He will judge with justice. Though His mercy prevails yet that depends on His will. He may forgive mountains of sin and punish tiny sin. That is a part, sin is not what one pursues. I have seen sinners who have lost every thing and come down to streets because they thought little of their sins and feared not of punishment. I have also come across those who claimed to be pious ulama but their private lives were naughty. They lost their charm and other people were not attracted to them.

The scale of Allah will not miss an atom's weight of misdeed. Some people rely on His mercy and indulge in sin incessantly. They are wrong. He may forgive or punish. Do not let the thought of His mercy cause you to overlook His justice, but endeavour to always wipe out your sins.

Be submissive and imploring before Allah. Nothing wipes out sin as humility does. Taking account of one's sins, repenting and weeping over them are the best ways to reform. When someone committed a very minor sin and repented over it, his inside prompted him that he should not fret over such a little thing, for, Allah's mercy is vast, beyond comprehension. But, he reminded himself that he gained nothing from committing the sin. How many sinful persons have been lost in time, leaving no sign of themselves whatsoever. This is an enablement that only Allah grants.

No sin is minor:-

Many people fail to regard sin as a sin. Students borrow books but do not bother to return them, though this is a sin. Other examples are joining a meal uninvited, disgracing an enemy on the imagination that it is proper, looking towards a woman, and so on. A person who does these things falls from grace and loses his rank in Allah's sight too. He was given as easy-to-hold trust but he breached it, so cannot hope for Allah's pleasure. A saint said himself, "I ate a morsel of unlawful food by oversight. This took me behind forty years." Listen to those who know. Do not disregard a spark. It is a mere spark that can consign a whole crowd into extinction. Use your mind and take an account of yourself. Sit down every day and think of the consequences. Use your insight. Seek Allah's forgiveness. In this way and by this prescription you will save yourself from sin: {لا حول ولا قوة الا بالله}

How and what to pray for:-

How amazing I find my soul. It asks Allah for what it needs but forget its sins and disobedience. It should ask for a pardon and then pray for its needs. "O Allah, protect me from overlooking my sins before praying for my worldly needs."

If you seek forgiveness and repent and erase your sins then you will get what you want automatically. Allah says,

"He who is precluded from praying to Me for his needs because of his occupation in remembering Me will get from me what I give those who ask."^①

Bishr Hāni رحمه الله عليه would raise his hands in prayer but withdraw them forthwith because he did not consider himself worthy of asking Allah for any thing. He possessed immense Divine awareness as though he saw Allah and felt ashamed to pray for anything because of his lapses. As for the negligent, they pray to Allah but are not near to Him. Is it not surprising that a man commits sin, and in spite of that, prays to Allah for worldly things. He does not ask for reformation of himself. If he ignores and neglects, he will be on the brink of destruction. Grief over sin must keep him away from other occupation. Hasan Basri رحمه الله عليه is known to fear Allah all the time.

Fun of effort for truth:-

Hold fast to taqwā. Do not prefer to be disobedient. Endure the thirst of the heat of base desires. When you have endured to capacity, you will be strong. You will attain the station when - if you swear by Allah - He will fulfil your promise. By Allah, if Umar ؓ had not persevered against desire then he could not have used his hand to control effectively. If the grandfather of Anas ibn Nazr رحمه الله عليه had not controlled himself, he could not have sworn by Allah that Rabi's teeth would not be broken, and he would not have said that, "If Allah enables me to participate in battle, then He will see how I fight for His religion." In fact, he did show his prowess in the Battle of Uhad till he was martyred and he had so many wounds on him that he could be recognised only from the marks on the tips of his fingers. These things are possible when one resists temptation for Allah's sake. The fruit of taqwā has an exceptional taste and it is honour in this world and recognition in hereafter.

If thirst for sin seems to overpower then raise the hands of hope before Him Who is able to quench all thirst and pray to Him to relieve you of temptation. Even while you do

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If thirst for sin seems to overpower then raise the hands of hope before Him Who is able to quench all thirst and pray to Him to relieve you of temptation. Even while you do

① Tirmidhi # 2926, Bayhaqi.

pious deeds, do not ignore your ego. Learn from those people who were pious and their lives but perished in the end at the hands of their base self. Instead of attaining heights they dropped to the lowest of low. The path to paradise lies in giving up desires. The perfect man is he who is able to get his desires when he is alone but refrains from them only to please Allah. He is not one who refrains from what he cannot get, who gives charity when he does not need it or he gives to those who praise him. You can deserve Allah's love only when you strengthen your relationship with Him and give up what you love and be patient over the forbidden and disliked things for Allah's sake.

Persuading oneself:-

It is not possible to control one's self without wisdom and planning. If it is left to itself then it will mislead you into immoral pleasures. If it is denied even the rightful things and treated harshly then your worship will be hampered in a very serious manner. Some people take to solitude so that it becomes accustomed to keeping away from the people, and to become frightful with the result that they neglect their obligations, obedience to parents and sick visits.

The best method is to be fair with it. Accustom it to hard work, give it its rights. Let it not go beyond the permitted. Give it its rights and take from it your rights.

Wasting time:-

Many people waste their time in idle pursuit, by night and by day. They ride a boat and do not know where it will take them and what their fate is.

Very few people value time and prepare for their final journey. They spend generously for Allah's cause but some others are stingy and make no preparation for the next world. We must value time, take knowledge as light and wisdom as a guide for the long journey.

The practicing ulamā:-

I have met many ulamā who do justice to their knowledge and some, in fact, do more work than that. But there are they who backbite others on the pretext of criticism, who ask for remuneration for narrating ahādith

and are very mindful of their honour and respect. I also attended the gatherings of Abdul Wahhāb A'atī رحمه الله عليه who conducted himself strictly in the manner of predecessors. Neither did he tolerate backbiting nor did he take wages for conducting his classes. When I repeated a hadith riqāq (on softening of hearts), he wept on hearing it and did not stop for long time. I was very young then but this left a deep impression on me and this was the beginning of my lessons on manners.

Abū Mansūr al-Jawālqī رحمه الله عليه was also a great man. He pondered long before he spoke. He was very pious and God fearing. He never was hasty to answer a question even if that was a simple one. He fasted often and observed silence always. I benefitted most from these two great men. Clearly, practical example is a better guide than oral sermonising. I also came across such ulamā whose private lives were adorned with delight and humour and they did not practice much what they taught. While they lived they did not diffuse much knowledge, and after their death, they were forgotten altogether. People were not inclined to their writings.

Indeed, the true objective is to put one's knowledge to practice. He is certainly a pauper who devotes his life to acquire such knowledge which when put in practice robs him of worldly delights and of virtues of the next world.

When life is at the end of its tether:-

The sight of awareness at the time of death is very strange. At that moment, there is an undescrivable awareness and an unlimited anxiety. The dying person regrets for the lost time and hopes to get a second chance to compensate for his negligence and to repent with a perfect knowledge. In fact, he will wish for an early end when the pangs of death are unbearable.

If even a fraction of this condition is experienced in the worldly life then man will become perfect pious and righteous. Hence, a sensible person keeps that picture before him all his life, or, at least, he thinks of it before everything

he does. This will enable him to shun sin and to do good deeds. It is said about Habib Ajami رحمه الله عليه that every morning he instructed his wife what should be done if he died during the day. Once Ma'ruf Karkhi رحمه الله عليه said to another man, "Today, lead the congregation in the salāh of zuhr." He said, "If I do that then I will not lead them in the salāh of asr." Ma'ruf Karkhi رحمه الله عليه said, "That means you hope to survive till asr. We seek refuge in Allah from tall hopes."

Self assessment:-

Availability of worldly things made it easy for me to avail of certain concessions but when I got nothing from them, I experienced an unpleasantness of the heart. I could see how I might acquire the world and darkness covered my heart. So, I checked myself. What good is a garden if that is an obstruction in religion. It is many times better to sleep in an animals barn with a proper heart than to lie lavishly on a king's bed. In this way, I always keep a check on my soul and I tell myself what is good for it and what is bad. I take an account of myself regularly and avoid doing that which is of no use, like if I amassed doubtful wealth in this world, would I also be able to spend all that (during my lifetime)? I will work for it but others would enjoy it. So, I must abstain from doing such a thing as keep me away from righteous and I must do it for Allah's sake alone, for, He surely bestows something better to such a person.

How many people accumulated large wealth but could not use it! Take a lesson from their lives. How many ulamā have piles of books but do not derive any benefit from them. They do not act on them. On the other hand, there are many who do not possess more than half a score of books, but they have deep, beneficial knowledge. There are those happy ones who do not own even a couple of rupees but their lives are full of content. In contrast, there are the rich who have stocks of gold and silver but they lead a miserable life.

Take a lesson from their lives. They earn more and more but their spendings increase at the same time, or there is a

serious illness in their family. Hence, the solution is to concentrate on the Being Who is Aware and sees everything and is Mighty. He sees the hidden just as He sees the outward. So, be careful of what you say and do. Keep away from concessions too. Practice taqwa and observe patience.

Punishment for disobedience:-

I often hear of people in authority and government indulge in rebaldry, alcoholism and indecency. Their crime attracts the prescribed punishment. "But when and who will impose the hadd on them?" I wondered Suddenly, they became target of a natural calamity and a lesson for other people. Their punishment exceeded the prescribed one. So, I am convinced that crime does not escape punishment.

What to do in anxiety:-

Difficulties and anxieties do not last beyond their determined term which is known to Allah alone. Hence, the person who is involved in it must show patience. There is no point in fretting over it before its term is over. It is wājib on man to be patient though he is allowed to supplicate. Coupled with patience supplication will be helpful, but the supplicant must not be uneasy and hasty. He must practice patience, submit to Allah's will and engage in worship, and he must give up all those things that may have brought about the calamity. It is contrary to servitude to pray for early relief from the affliction. The highest degree of servitude is to bow before Allah's will and to show patience. It is preferable to make much supplication and weep, and it is unlawful and forbidden to refrain from making supplication as is it is to show impatience. If you understand the philosophy then it will be easy for you to endure the calamity.

Reflection of private life on public life:-

A man's private life casts its reflection on the public life outside My riads of Allah's believing slaves fear Allah's wrath and hope for reward and respect His Greatness in private and give up their own pleasures for His sake. This conduct has its effect on other people. It is like a person

burning incense. The fragrance will spread far and wide though people do not trace out its source. The efforts depends on the desires that are given up and the fragrance is linked to the effort. People's tongues are moist with praise for those who give their desires for Allah's sake and their eyes bow down in their honour. They are remembered for long, even after their death, commensurate with their efforts in Allah's path. Some are forgotten after a long period of time. Some are spoken for a hundred years and then the people forget them. Some others are remembered always, in every generation. As against these, there are those who fear the people and do not respect Allah's rights in private. They are like those who diffuse a pungent odour which is in keeping with their sins and they will be remembered as evil for a period of time matching their sin. Some people do many good deeds but because of their commission of sin they remain unknown and neither are they praised nor blamed.

Do ponder over it. How many evil effects are there of a man's sins. Abū Darda رضي الله عنه said, "When a man disobeys Allah, He causes the people to dislike him without his realising it. Ponder over whatever I have written and try to understand it well. Do not let your private hours go to waste. Reform both the unseen and the seen side of your life because deeds are rewarded or punished depending on the intentions that prompt them. It is sincerity of intentions that count.

Sin and repentance:-

He who seeks peace and security always must not disobey Allah. If anyone gives himself a free hand against the taqwā then, sooner or later, he faces punishment. Sometimes, if the punishment is held in abeyance, he deceives himself that he is forgiven. He forgets Allah's saying: {وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا يُحْزِبْهُ}. Or he expects that Allah will forgive and he commits more sin in that expectation. Yes, Allah forgives. But He forgives whom He will. Let me explain what forgiveness and repentance are. If anyone commits a sin unintentionally and has no intention to repeat it, and he realise his mistakes, and he is remorseful and beseeches

Allah to forgive him, then Allah forgives him. His repentance washes off his sin. This is what Allah's words tell us. {إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَائِفٌ مِّنَ الشَّيْطَانِ تَذَكَّرُوا فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْصِرُونَ}. He who commits sin persistently and insists on repeating them is certainly one who commits them intentionally. He violates Allah's commands openly. So pardon is in accordance with insistence and sin will be punished. Ibnul Halā رحمه الله عليه said, "My shaykh saw me converse with a christian boy and asked me why and said." You will suffer punishment for it certainly, even if it is after some time.' Indeed I forgot the Qur'an after forty years."

You must believe that it is wrong to suppose that one is not punished for his sins if his body is healthy. One is punished at the proper time. Rather the severest punishment is the lack of realisation that a sin has been committed. When hearts lose the feeling and the souls becomes accustomed to sin that is the harshest of punishments, even if one is healthy outwardly and one's ambitions are fulfilled.

Someone said that he did not check his gaze though on the permitted thing, and then waited to be punished. Indeed he was compelled to undertake a long journey suddenly. It was very tiresome. Meanwhile he lost some of the close relatives and some very profitable possessions. Then he made a repentance so that his condition improved. Once again, he was tempted and misused his glance. He lost his hearts feelings and light and tenderness. He suffered more than he had suffered previously. Again he repented and abandoned the causes of his misconduct. His condition was corrected.

So, let those who pursue base desires, mend their ways and stick to a righteous life. It may difficult to adopt a life of taqwā but according to the proverb {الحمية تعضب الصحة} health improves after fever (has gone). After hardship, there is ease.

By Allah, in order to gain Allah's pleasure it is many time better to sleep on the garbage with the dogs than to sleep in large palaces of immodesty. If you displease Allah and get all you crave for in the world then that is of no use.

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In fact, that is destruction. The sensible person looks at the results which matter. May Allah show mercy. Persevere in the face of trials and calamity which are ephemeral. You will soon get over them. True enablement is from Allah (لا حول ولا قوة الا بالله).

To surrender before desire:-

If anyone's soul tempts him to perpetrate the unlawful and does not let him think over it then his intelligence checks him, saying "You will go awry and miss the path of progress." If he rejects the appeal of intelligence and succumbs to the soul then he will begin his own downfall. He will be like the dog whom the lion called dishonest but he insisted that he was honest. So the lion gave him some meat for safe keeping till the next day. But, the dog found it very tempting and gulped it down even at the risk of being called dishonest. The feeble-minded people are like the dog. They cannot resist sin and prefer the prompt fulfilment of desire to the promised blessing in future.

Man is destroyed by base desires and sometimes the very first slip is his down fall. So keep away from the means of sin because if you are near then it is difficult to avert them.

Devil's temptation:-

I observed that all people are at war. The devil uses the arrows of temptation against them, and also the swords of sweet taste to throw them off balance. The feeble lose in the very first round but those who defend themselves have to labour hard fight a long drawn battle. They get the wounds but repairs them through repentance, the effect, however, stays. The mark disfigures. So you may try not to get hurt at all.

Try to avert the devil's mischief:-

The world is a net and one who is unaware can be trapped in it. But, the pious person protects himself and shows patience. He keeps away from the attractive charming net. There are people who averted the alluring net for years together, but suddenly fell into the trap. So, do not be neglectful even for a moment.

Believe me, the after effects of sin are very damaging and the regret that follows is manifold times more than the fleeting delight from them. Alas for those who suffer punishment but do not realise that they are undergoing punishment.

It is punishment itself not to realise that one is on its receiving end. What kind of a person is he who surrenders to his base self and lets it enjoy and, at the same time, obeys Allah to please Him, and then calls the whole thing 'piety'. How foolish of him! He does not realise that sometimes even a single slip might lead him to his utter downfall. Get up from your sleep. What are you waiting for? Hurry up, make a repentance. If you get all your wishes in this world, even then they will be lost very soon. The last sip is going to be very bitter. What kind of an intelligence is it that does not ponder on the final repercussions. Look at the graves. Were not they with us? Where are they who played in luxury? What will happen if punishment follows punishment?

Muhammad ibn Abdur Rahmān As-Sirfi رحمه الله عليه said that his neighbour saw Yahyā ibn Akthum رحمه الله عليه in a dream after he had died. He asked him how did Allah treat him. He narrated that when he was before Allah, He said, "How bad of you, O Shaykh!" So he pleaded, "O Allah, your Messenger has said that you feel ashamed to punish an eighty years old man." He said, "My Messenger has spoken the truth. I forgive you."

Muhammad ibn Aslam al-Khawās رحمه الله عليه said that he saw Yahyā ibn Akthum in a dream. He narrated that Allah made him stand before Him and asked, "Is that enough for having been lost in worldly pursuits?"

We pray to Allah that He may wake up from us our negligent sleep and let us see the evils of the sins.

Prepare for death:-

Be ready for death. Keep yourself in a state of preparedness, always. It comes all of a sudden. We must not deceive ourselves with our youth and sound health, for, few people live to die as old men. Many die in their youth. As poet says:

وينسى من يموت من الشباب

يعمر واحد فيرقوما

(If one man lives to old age, the

entire people are deceived

They forget those who die in

their youth).

If anyone cherishes tall hopes than he will find them a major problem, a great deception and a terrible trial. He becomes neglectful and careless. He expects to make a repentance later on, so commit sin on the expectation. If you can not cut down on your hopes than at least do such deeds as reduce your hopes and expectations. Review the deeds, you have done during the day, in the evening. If you have committed a sin, lose no time to make a repentance and erase it. Seek Allah's forgiveness. In the morning, think of the deeds you performed in the night and repent for the bad deeds you may have done. Never waste time in making a repentance, for, this is the devil's weapon whereby he destroys man. Think of your short life in which you have packed many occupations and think of yourself on the death bed when you will regret very much many a wrong you commit in your life. See yourself after your death: how you will wish of things to have happened in a different way. Think of the blessings that Allah will bestow on the perfectly pious knowing that you are way behind in the deeds you perform. How people work for the hereafter while you cannot shake off your lethargy. Make yourself such that you see every moment of your life for pious work, because the soul is like a stubborn horse which would throw you down to perish if you are soft on its bridle. Always be wary of the devil who is ready to trap you in his net of desires. Many a man has been entangled in his trap and into destruction.

لا حول ولا قوة الا بالله العلي العظيم

The better repentance:-

One must try one's best to keep away from sin. Many sins there are that lower the sinner from rank to rank and lead him to other kinds of sin. He loses in the world too, but, alas, he does not seem to realise that he is being punished. If the punishment is held in abeyance then it is more painful

and, indeed, its cause is also forgotten and the need to repent and seek forgiveness is overlooked. Take lesson from these word of Ibn Sireen رحمه الله عليه. He says, "I scared a person of poverty and need but, after forty years, I myself fell into poverty." And so is the saying of Ibn Khalal رحمه الله عليه, "I looked at a beautiful young man. I was punished for that forty year later when I forgot Qur'an."

How great a blessing is repentance that relieves a man of punishment for his sins. And sin is great cause of loss.....particularly the sin committed in privacy. Disobedience to Allah lowers a man in his own eyes. Hence, you must correct your secret ties with Allah and He will correct your open ties. O you sinner, any moment your sins may be disclosed and any moment you may be punished. Grieve over your sins. Weep and plead for forgiveness always. If anything can help then it is repentance and tears of regret.

Honour relative to sense of Allah's greatness:-

Listen to the advice of an experienced person. When a man honours Allah and recognises His greatness, Allah puts in the hearts of people as much recognition of this man. The people will honour him in accordance to that.

Indeed, I have seen people who spent their lives in acquisition of knowledge till they grew old. If they violated the limits even at that age, they lost their esteem in the eyes of the masses, their skill and learning not with standing.

At the other end, there are people not much learned but observed of Allah's limits. People threw on them great respect and held them in high esteem. I have also seen such people who were firm on religion and were given due respect of them by the masses a but if some of them swerved a little from the path then they had a reciprocal response from them.

Sometimes the punishment is stretched:-

When you commit a sin and you observe signs of punishment do not raise a hue and cry. Do not complain that you made a repentance but the punishment was awarded in spite of that. You may have not made a proper repentance.

The punishment can follow the pattern of a long drawn illness. It will stop only when its term is over.

O you sinner! Observe patience till such time as your tears wash off the impurity in your heart. (Sayyidina) Aadam ﷺ wept for a mistake he had committed for three hundred years. Ayyūb ﷺ suffered illness for eighteen long years. Ya'qūb ﷺ wept for eight years for Yūsuf ﷺ. Calamities end at their appointed time at the end of which they are removed. Some difficulties last a lifetime. In such times, make it a point to turn to Allah. Weep and grieve till it is over and you find happiness. If you die before it ends then whatever hardship you have gone through will be compensated for in the hereafter. Indeed, that is a great success.

Extinguish Allah's wrath with tears of repentance:-

A sensible person keeps away from sin. Sometimes the punishment is given after a delay but at other times it is prompt. Hence, do not procrastinate in extinguishing the fire of sin which can be done only with tears.

Fear Allah in every condition:-

How can one claim to possess Divine awareness and also disobey Allah's commands? Does he not know that life is possible only with Allah as a Companion?

A man of Allah found a young man in a shelter in Beirut engaged in remembering Allah. He asked him if he needed anything. The young man said, "If I need something, I supplicate Allah for it in my heart and He gets me that thing." So, O you who profess belief, be awake and do not let anything evil enter your soul.

Gives up your desires for the sake of Allah. Your wishes will be fulfilled by themselves. Do not expect reward in this case, for, this is the demand of servitude. And servitude calls for deeds for only Allah's sake. A slave cannot expect wages from his master. One gives up everything for the pleasure of whom he loves. When it is difficult to endure hardship to please Allah then ask only Him for help and even if you are crushed under hardship, do not lose hope of Allah's mercy.

Indeed, to die while one serves is regarded by the intelligent as excellent.

I tell myself that Allah has given me everything..... even what I had never conceived. He gave all that without my asking. And He has concealed my shortcomings, for, if He disclosed them, I would be disgraced. Why then should I raise a clamour if a little of my wishes are withheld? I am a slave and cannot complain. "Look at your eyes. A small mishap may cause you to lose your sight. Yet you have shut your insight which is superior to the sight." I am at the fag end of my life, yet my eyes ogle just as they did when they were young. Let me protect my privacy. Let me correct my past mistakes. Why is it that as I grow old my deeds get fewer and fewer? Was not my youth better than my old age?

وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَالُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَا إِلَّا الْعَالِمُونَ

O Allah, enable me to do righteous deeds. Indeed, You are All-Hearing and you alone approve.

Reward for abstinence:-

One day, I had enough ability to get my desire and it would have been more satisfying to me than cool water could be to a very thirsty person. My soul told me that only taqwā could obstruct, for that desire was disallowed by Shari'ah. After a slight hesitation, I did not allow my soul to go for the desire, Saying, "How many times have you had your desire but what remains with you besides regret? Even now, you will get nothing but disgrace." I gave up the desires only to please Allah, so I now await His reward. He may reward me soon or at a later date. I will never be doubtful even if there is a delay because I am certain that Allah rewards one who abandons something for Allah's sake. "My soul, be proud of his perseverance, for there are many who suffer humiliation because of their impatience." I must refrain from every unjust desire in future. Only Allah enables: (ولا حول ولا قوة الا بالله العلي العظيم). Four years later I got the reward in the shape of that which is lawful in Shariah and preferred in common life.

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An intelligent person thinks of the consequences of his deed. One who walks on a path sets his foot carefully lest he fall down in a ditch. It is like a battle field where everyone is very alert, for, a sudden impulse might mislead him.

Avoid the doubtful too:-

Nearness to a trial (and wrong) is itself a trial. It is very rare that one goes near sin without plunging into it. A very religious man recounted his experience when he was near something that was forbidden though, from an angle, it was also permitted. So, he was inclined to do it but he held himself back. His inner soul challenged him, "You avoid it because you do not have full ability. Only when you have complete ability and you shun it will that be counted as piety." This man gained full control over it and thought of leaving it at that but his inner self now presented the argument of permissibility from an angle. Indeed, he nearly plunged into it when his (pious) heart seemed to get darkness over it. In this way, he fought with temptation, now giving in, now withdrawing and, finally, managed to withdraw, resolving not to approach anything in future unless he was fully certain of its permissibility. Hence, this is the best prescription for saving oneself from wrong-doing and one must never go near the means of sin nor avail of the concessions.

Desires make one neglectful:-

When a person commits a sin, he is intoxicated with desires and that blurs his thinking. He has nothing on mind but to get what he desires otherwise the mere knowledge of opposing Allah's command would throw him out of religion. He only fulfils his desires and in the process disobeys the command of Allah. This happens because of going near the means of sin and intelligent does not help out such time. An intelligent man would not otherwise plunge into what brings perpetual regret.

How many wrong are done and accomplished in moments. But the regret they leave behind is for the rest of the life. Once you realise that the solution lies in keeping away the means to the sins, you are assured safety.

Dominating desire:-

The sinners do not commit sin because they intend to disobey Allah. Rather the motive is to satisfy their lust and while they do it, they happen to disobey Allah. They rely on Allah's mercy and forgiveness. If they also bear in mind that He is the Mighty and the Reckoner then perhaps they will not dare to commit sin. In fact, they must remember His attributes whereby He cause to die, to fall sick, become poor or rich. He says: **وَيَحْذَرُكُمُ اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُ**

We conclude from surah Yūsuf that Yūsuf **عليه السلام** threw out his desires and attained a high station. The main reason for the success is to oppose the desires of the soul. He was an example of patience and perseverance. It is just a moment's patience. To cast off such desires spells success and to pursue them bring's ruin. Distinguish between the bitter and sweet. To curb base desires is the root of all success and to satisfy them is the cause of all failures.

Result of excess:-

There was an unprecedented inflation in 572 AH. Prices rose very high and food items were beyond purchasing power. The farmer were envied because they produce their own provision. The hoarders were very happy while other people spent all that they possessed to get their bare needs. I seized the moment to ask myself how happy they would be on the day of resurrection who had performed good deeds in the world. They would have all they need. But, they who did not sow any good, how regretful they would be! So, go on sowing for the hereafter. This is the moment to sow and cultivate the fields.

Negligence is behind sin:-

I realised on pondering that behind piety lies thinking and contemplating while disobedience has its roots in negligence and lack of planning. There is One Who has

created the world, Who must be obeyed. Think of the Messenger's mission and his miracle and accept the sharia'h as the final word, the code of life. Think then of the deeds that will pull you nearer to Allah and of those that will push you into His displeasure. If it is difficult to think of these things then think of the consequences. Like, if it is difficult to get up in the night then think of the reward that will accrue on arising from sleep to worship Allah. So, when it is not easy to ward off an evil thought, think of the punishment and disgrace that will follow. So, too, if you are inclined to sieze revenge from someone, think of the excellence of patience and of the evil effects of losing your temper. In this way, you will find it easy to control yourself. See how quickly the years roll by. Every moment is precious. But, if you are negligent then you will not observe anything at all. Some people are so negligent that they never ponder on the world and its Creator and they are on the verge of denying the Messenger and the shari'ah he brought. They never ponder on the background of things but are concerned only with what profits them.

In the same way, they fulfil every desire that comes to their minds without pondering on where it will land them. In their haste, they miss many merits. The thing to do is to ponder and the thing to avoid is evil desire. May Allah bring in us an awakening whereby we may evaluate the consequences merits and punishment of deeds. **وانه قادر على ذلك**

Please the Creator not the created:-

A sensible person tries to please Allah in all circumstances even if the creatures are displeased. If anyone displeases the Creator in order to please the creatures then Allah will cause them, whom he endeavours to please, to dislike him. This can be seen in the case of Tahir ibn Husayn and Mamun ur Rashid. In order to please Mamun, Tahir killed his brother mercilessly. But, rather than be pleased with him, Mamun disliked him. One day, he wept when Tahir came to his court and subsequently confided to his personel servant, Husayn, that whenever he saw Tahir, he remembered his brother Mahmud. Husayn disclosed this to Tahir who requested Ahmad ibn Abu Khalid to send him

some distant place, away from Mamun. So, he convinced Mamun to replace the bad tempered governor of Baghdad, Ghassan ibn Abbād and send Tahir ibn Husayn there. After some day he did not pray for Mamun in his Friday sermon. Mamun's intelligence agent questioned him and he pleaded that he had forgotten and requested him not to report that to Mamun. However, the same thing happened on the second and third Friday. Mamun's agents wrote about it to him lest someone else overtake him in conveying this information. Mamun ordered Ahmad ibn Khalid to summon Tahir to him otherwise he would punish Ahmad. In compliance of the royal command Ahmad travelled to bring back Tahir though the journey was very arduous and he was seriously ill. When he was at Rayy, he learnt that Tahir had died. This was his punishment for displeasing Allah to please the creatures.

On the other hand, If anyone does not care for the pleasure of the creature but seeks to please Allah then Allah is pleased with him, Al-Mustarshad billah, who was the crown prince, wrote a letter to the prime minister Ibn Hubayrah with oral instructions that his father should not be told of the message. But, the prime minister told the courier that he could not read the letter or act on it and he did not unseal it. Later, when Al-Mustarshad billah became king, he retained the prime minister on his office because of his honesty and faithfulness.

Once some people demanded permission to search the treasury for recovery of their debts. Al-Mustarshad billah ordered the treasurer to give them permission on condition that they would not damage anything else. He sought permission from the court, from the judge Ibn ar-Ratbi but he refused to confirm permission. When the treasurer approached another judge, he gave his consent. When Al-Mustarshad learnt of his, he relieved the consenting judge of his post and commended Ibn ar-Ratbi an honest judgement.

Once the king demanded that he should be called Shahinshah, king of kings. The ulama confirmed in their edict that he should be so called, but one of them, Imām al-Māwārdī رحمه الله عليه refused to give a confirmation. However, he did not lose his esteem with the king.

If Allah is pleased, no one can harm you in the least. But, if you displease Allah then He will cause His creatures to be displeased with you.

Advice to the aged:-

He is fool who is unsure when death will strike him but he does not prepare himself for it. A greater fool is he who is on the verge of death-past sixty-yet makes no preparation for it. A poet says:

قال الشباب لعلنا في شينا ندع الذنوب فما يقول الاشيب؟

The young man says: we will still have old age
Leave us to sin-but what say those
who're in old age?

How can we explain jest and humour in old age? How is he happy? The world has forsaken him. His limbs have surrendered. His mind and thought are awry. What does he have after sixty years of age? If he expects a longer life then it will be a misery for him. He will be unable to do anything. So, it is a sign of intelligence to adopt good manners and acquire knowledge from childhood. As he grows, he must go on doing good deeds and at forty years of age, he must bid goodbye to all and prepare for his death, having only desire-his real homeland! He must be grateful for every moment of life he gets and do more good with every passing moment. We pray to Allah for a discerning sight and alert heart, and such righteous deeds as protect us from regret at the time of death.

Degree of sin:-

Whether a sin is minor or major, it is detestable. Some, however, are very bad like adultery, but adultery with neighbour is worst. Abdullah ibn Mas'ūd ؓ narrated that when he asked the Prophet ﷺ about the gravest of sins, he said, "To ascribe partner to your Creator." He asked what was after that and he said, "To kill one's own children

because of poverty." When asked about the next, he said, "To commit adultery with your neighbour's wife."^① Miqdad ibn Aswad ؓ narrated the Prophet ﷺ saying that to commit adultery with your neighbour's wife is worse than committing adultery with ten women. To steal from your neighbour's house is worse than stealing from ten houses. And a sin greater than that is an old man committing adultery.^② According to hadith, "Allah detests the aged adulterer very much." He has no urge but he merely transgresses and disobeys (just to disobey). Also, use of gold, silver and silk is sinful, particularly for an old man to use these things as an adornment. In the same way, it is sinful to show off and to present oneself as saintly, pious and God-fearing. To deal in interest also falls in the same bracket particularly if a rich man is involved.

If an old man is terminally ill and he does not make a repentance to Allah, does not repay his debt and does not leave behind instructions for the right-holders to the given their dues, then this is very disagreeable. It is also very bad to vow to divorce one's wife but commit perjury and stay with her.

Perpetrators of such crimes deprive themselves of Allah's mercy and deserve perpetual punishment. Alcoholism too is one of these sins. By itself, one is not inclined to it, nor compelled to it, but one resorts to it only out of a rebellion. We pray belief that intervenes between us and our sins and seek His pleasure.

Weakness among the ulamā:-

I have found many ulamā zahids (ascetics) to be involved in hidden pride and egoism. Thus do not visit a sick person because they consider themselves better than him. Some of them leave dying instructions to be buried within the compound of their mosque, perhaps that their graves might become like the shrine of Ma'rūf Karkhi رحمه الله عليه. This hidden malady is very dangerous. Many people are unaware of it. The Prophet ﷺ said, "He who imagine that he is better than others has, indeed, boasted." How can anyone regard

①..... Bukhari, Muslim

②..... Bukhari

himself as better than others? If he has knowledge then there have been more learned man before. If he is a worshipper of Allah then there were ascetics and righteous men better than him. If he has property then this is not religious excellence. Besides, even if the past is not compared then his own times no one must regard himself as better than another believer though he may possess less knowledge. What matters is approval. If anyone examine himself then he will know that he is not better than anyone, but poorer than others in every respect. In this way, he will be free of egoism. It is believer's sign that he regards himself as lowly.

Umar bin Abdul Aziz رضى الله عنه was told that when he died would be buried in his own room. He said, "I do not deserve it. Rather than regard my self as deserving of it, I should die as a sinner." A monk dreamt that someone told him that a certain cobbler was better than him. When he asked him what kind of deeds he performed, he said, "I do not do any worth while deed." Again he dreamt that he should ask him what had brought the shine in his face. The cobbler said, "I regard every Muslim is better than me." This was his distinguishing mark.

Alert for death:-

If anyone thinks of the consequences but does not prepares himself for it then he too is not very sensible. A young man may commit wrong and procrastinate on repentance on the plea that he has enough time on hand then it is not certain that he would survive till old age. In this way, one misses the opportunity. It is unwise to hope for the future. If one survives till old age then that is an added benefit. Some people, who are in the good books of the ruler, let loose oppression on other people, but when the table are turned on them, they find it very difficult to cope with the retaliation of the others. A sensible person does not cross the limits but looks at the consequences. he must regard life as mean of earning for the future and seek that which is precious and exquisite. That is divine awareness. This is possible after tremendous effort. An effort is made with regular increase. It is like visitor to Makkah who performs is many tawaf as he can, regarding every moment as an

opportunity, particularly one who has little hope of revisiting Makkah. He too whose ship is almost at the shore of death must perform a maximum amount of pious deeds and his limbs have weakened. He must be alert constantly. He must keep in mind the hadith of Ibn Umar رضى الله عنه, "Each one of you is shown his place in paradise and hell every morning and evening and is told 'This is your place till Allah will resurrect you.'"^①

Lustful desire and their deception:-

Inborn to man is a desire for women, more than other desires.^② When he sees a beautiful woman, he forgets his wife and is mad about her wishing to marry her or get close to her when he gets that he soon detects her shortcomings that had escaped his earlier madness. He then turns to other without caring for the trouble he goes through. The other woman may turn out to be irreligious or insensible which might draw him on the point of utter failure. People who commit adultery habitually are like that. They do not observe the women's qualities and they keep changing their partners. But, a person can never get all his wants. Allah says:

وَلَسْتُمْ بِأَعْدِيهِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَغِيضُوا فِيهِ

How can a woman of the world compare with woman of the paradise? Allah says: { وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا أَزْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ }. The women of the world are ugly and have shortcoming.

Pursuing lustful desire is beastly:-

Some immoral people boast that the meaning of life is to satisfy the bare desire of the soul. Only those who have nonsense of honour can say such things and they are outside the fold of humanity because a man's sense of honour is aroused at the slightest fear of accusation. So, a person who does not mind if his honour is at stake is like a beast that satisfies its base desires at will. What a wretched life an alcoholic leads, for, he is in fear of being caught, arrested or beaten of given evil names. There is no peace in lethargy that leaves a person way behind his companions in

① Bukhari, Muslim

② ibid

learning, in labour and in earnings. How bad it is for an adulterer if he does not fear the repercussions in the world and the chastisement in the hereafter. May Allah enable us to keep ourselves away from the base things and to seek the excellent things. Aameen, O Lord of the worlds.

Consequences of disobedience:-

Sometimes Allah puts off punishment to the disobedient, Merciful as he is. But, a sensible person, nevertheless, wastes no time to make a repentance because no one knows how long he will live. If the sin is against Allah's might than it cannot be atoned and if it is committed by a mystic then it is never forgiven and the punishment is given promptly. Abdul Majid ibn Abdul Aziz رَحِمَهُ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ said that someone in Khurasan wrote the entire Qur'an in three days. When someone asked him about the number of days, he pointed the middle-finger fore-finger and the thumb and said, "Three" and quoted the verse {وَمَا مَسْنَانٌ لِّغُوبٍ}. All three fingers were crippled and rendered useless.^① A learned orator thought that he too could compare eloquent words like the Qur'an. He asked the people to give him three days he was found dead, a pen in his hand that was withered like a dried leaf. A man used to have sexual intercourse with his wife during her menstruation. The result was that he also have menses and when made a repentance they ceased.^②

Similarly if one taunts someone then he gets punishment for it very soon, particularly on such things as is not in his hands, like calling him, 'O blind one,' 'O lame man,' if he has this problem. Ibn Sirin رَحِمَهُ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ taunted someone for his poverty. The result was that he went into debt after that. So, do not waste time to seek forgiveness and make a repentance.

The evil ulamā:-

There is a section of the scholars who perpetrate sin on the imagination that their knowledge will save them. They forget that before one sin is forgiven to them, the ignorant

① Al-Farq bayn an-nasihah wa attabir, by Ibn Rajab Hanbali.

② ibid.

will be pardoned seventy sins, because the ignorant does not see the truth while a scholar possesses the Divine knowledge but, in spite of that, is immodest. Knowledge is an awareness of the realities, the life of the predecessors and their manners, and an awareness of Allah. Those ulama who do not possess this attribute rely merely on words and they only distinguish the lawful and the unlawful. This knowledge is not of benefit. As for beneficial knowledge, it comprises an understanding of fundamental principle, recognition of the Creator and an awareness of His Greatness, and the biography of the Prophet ﷺ and his sahabah رَضِيَ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُمْ.

The more a person possesses beneficial knowledge, the more he considers himself lowly and others as better than he. I have worshipped Allah for several years and then slacked, saying, "I have engaged in Allah's worship as none hās. Now I am weak." These words are very harmful and I fear that all their worship is washed off because of these words by which they esteem themselves above others though their status is like one who begs. Will a beggar think of having favoured his benefactor? He boasts because he is unaware of the facts and is ignorant. They are not ulama or like the predecessors who did much but thought of that as nothing worthy. They always prayed to be forgiven. It is said about Silah ibn Ashyam رَحِمَهُ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ that beasts dared not to come near him. He worshipped Allah all the night and then raised his hands in prayer, "O Lord deliver me from the fire" {اجرنى من النار} "I do not deserve to ask for paradise." More than that is the prayer of Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, "I wish that I gain deliverance so that a balance is struck-neither there is anything against me nor I get anything." We pray to Allah to give us an awareness whereby we know our reality. May preserve us from conceit and from thinking highly of our deeds. Aameen.

Plea of fate:-

Many people shun from performing deeds on the plea that if Allah had decreed they would have been pious. This is an excuse and it contradicts the sayings of Allah's Messenger ﷺ. It is as the Khawarij said to Ali رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, "We invite

you to abide by Allah's Book." He said, "What you say is correct but you derive a wrong meaning from it." Those refused to pay zakāh said the liked of it," Shall we feed those whom if Allah had willed He would have fed?" Enablement is an imperceptible, hidden affair while Allah's command is a conspicuous, clear command. So, it is not correct to neglect the conspicuous and follow the imperceptible. Besides, Allah does not make anyone responsible without enabling him.

The means through which you intend to satisfy your desires can well be used to discharge your obligations. Why then lean on destiny for not discharging your duties? Examples are: you do travel for business or pleasure but not for pilgrimage, you do wake for personel pleasure but not for the morning prayer and you do stand with friend to gossip for hours together but not for a prayer. These are flimsy pretext.

So, do not let the apportunity get out of your hands. Do not deprive yourself of reward while you have strength. If you have no feeling then your heart is numb and no wound can prick it. Think how it will be when you are raised from the grave. Your steps will waver on sirat. There will be regret. So, wake up. Rectify your innerself. Seek Allah's help and pray to Him. Join those who perform deeds, and be on right path.

What is the right path:-

I reflected on the saying of Abū Darda ؓ, "Of our deeds today, I recognize nothing but the qiblah." Alas! What would he say about us, today? We only name the Shari'ah thought it is the Prophet's ﷺ words of deeds. The veering from his ways is either because of ignorance or rebellion. People walk as per their habits even if it contradicts the Shari'ah of Muhammad ﷺ.

The sāhaba رضي الله تعالى عنهم observed the Prophet's ﷺ life and heard him. They conducted themselves in his manner, but yet even a slight departure from it brought strong words of condemnation from Abū Darda ؓ. We see the truth but pursue our desires. We still have the Prophet's ﷺ ahādith, but we have given up learning them and reflecting on them-save those who Allah wills. We find it easier to abide

by our likes. If the so - called ulamā refrain from the sciences of shari'ah then what may be expected of the massess? When most of the ulama gave the cold shoulder to the shari'ah, they invented bidah under the camouflage of (usul and furu') fundamentals principles and deriatives. They occupied themselves in scholastic theology and weakened in the science of the Qur'ān and ahādith and turned to logic and philosophy as branches of knowledge. Then they involved themselves in side issue and ceased to learn the ahadith on which the commands evolve. Add to that they read lent their voices to poetry which they read in charming voices at the cost of knowledge of ahadith and forgot to fobid teh people such things as interest, adultery, and so on and to urge them to fulfil their obligations. Their gatherings became famous for relating stories Tur, Mūsā, Abū Yazid, Hallāj which are meaningless. Some people kept themselves aloof of others and called that zuhd (asceticism), so much so that they abandoned sick visits and meeting other people. They wrote books of sufism and shari'ah became what the sufis defined. The rulers called politics and engrossed themselves in it. Where do we find Muhammad's ﷺ shari'ah in that? How will any one learn that without reading the Qur'ān and the hadith. May Allah enable us to abide by the Shari'ah and to reject bid'ah. Aameen!

The soul craves for base desire:-

I heard Ali ibn Husayn al-Wa'iz رحمه الله عليه declare on the pulpit, "Last night, my soul caused me to weep." I wondered what is soul may have done to him. I found out that he is a rich man who possesses beautiful Turkish female slaves and he has married many women secretly. His diet is nothing short of chicken, fish and sweet meat. He also commands respect. He has acquire knowledge too. And through his generosity he has won over many ulama who sing his praise. Hence, I concluded that anyone's soul will not stop at any point, but keep demanding fresh desires, till the end of life or weakness in body and damage to the honour. But, even after that the object is not achieved. No one can get the real pleasure in this world beyond relief from pain. He is fortunate who is content with what he has. One wife is better

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from both worldly and religious point of view. The way to have a blissful life with her is to keep one's gaze away from other women and not to covet for more wives.

Instead of letting the soul demand more and more, you must rein in its desires. That guarantees a happy life. If not, then desires will never end and destruction awaits you, and the people will ridicule you. Those in this category include the spend thrift and the woman who hates her husband. The most foolish man in the world is the aged man who desires a young girl. An old man not be deceived by his urge to have a sexual intercourse because his example is like the false dawn that will end very soon. I know of an old man who bought a female slave with whom he spent night and was found dead in the morning. A young man was admitted to a hospital for two months. Once, when his wife visited him, he had sexual intercourse with her, but he died immediately. These two examples show that desires haunt man till his death. If an old man, who cannot have an intimate relationship, makes do with love play then women will detest him. She might even contemplate him out of her way. If a sixty-year old man finds a religious-minded young woman ready to marry him then he must be kind and compassionate to her, showering monetary gifts and being considerate. He must narrate to her accounts of righteous women, of the day of resurrection and worthiness of the world. He must mention the poetry of Arabs which only love is mentioned but nothing sexual love, like one says:

☆ انما الحب قبله ☆ وغمز كف وعضد ☆ انما العشق كذا ☆

☆ ان نكح الحب فسد ☆

(Love is to kiss and touch - this is love - if you transgress to have sex then that corrupts love)

He who plunges into anything without knowing the consequences is like a bird that rushes to pick up a seed lying below the net.

Foolish to put off piety:-

It is amazing for anyone to be deceived by his sound body and puts off righteous work through there is not any culmination point of hopes, nor of deception. It is more surprising when one sees the graves and knows that he will

be encased in one of these. A sensible person amasses for hard times knowing that ranks of the hereafter increase relative deeds in this world, for this will not be possible after death. Even if sins are forgiven, how will he gain the ranks of the doers of good deeds? While the pleasure from sins is fleeting, the punishment is unending. May Allah guide us! Aameen!

Abstaining from the negligent:-

The dwellers of Paradise continue to get fresh bounties every moment. These bounties are commensurate with pious deeds. If that is so, why should we waste even a moment, particularly if just سبحان الله (subhanAllah) will get us one palm tree every time we say it. So, go on doing deeds, for, after the bitterness of death, there is the sweetness of comfort. You will learn ranks while the soul is being extracted, nay, even before that.

All calamities will come after death. Do something now. If not, the dark night is ahead when no one will guide you. You will be enabled by Allah. The assemblies of the people who view only the worldly pleasure and nothing else are very hazardous and they divert one from the thought of the hereafter.

Pleasure of life are good deeds:-

Those people who possess Divine awareness are always peaceful and content because they submit happily to Allah's decree. They understand everything as from Allah. If their prayer do not get a prompt answer, their hearts have no doubt because they regard themselves as slaves (of Allah). They always intend to serve Allah's religion. Anyone who possess such qualities, never prefers anything to the hereafter nor mingles with other people. He is content with what he gets. But those are unfamiliar with these things, their lives are very troubled.

On some reflection, I found that no one is ideal to me. My wife, children and even the servants - all have own interests. If they gained nothing from me then they would not even come near me. I looked at my soul and its affairs too is not clear with me. This leaves only the Creator for me. I do not find myself safe from trial and if I hope for

forgiveness, I fear punishment, too. Where then is peace?

Keep the end in mind:-

The most foolish of men is he who does not look beyond current times. It is like the rulers who boast about their authority and deceive themselves that they are strong. When they are out of the government they fall in the pit of destruction. It is the same with a strong man till he loses his wealth. Those who are fond of rich food and drink or of pursuing low desires also end up weak and sick because of this unhealthy habit. A sensible person reviews the circumstances remain the same. Before taking a step, think of the consequences. Do not trust your wife and children too while you prepare for departure from this world.

The company to be kept:-

If Allah has blessed anyone with an aptitude to study the lives of the *ulamā* and the worthy predecessors than he sees ahead of him darkness and many *ulamā* off the course. He will find their company and their assemblies of no profit but damaging. However it is of great to keep company of people of higher rank as far as knowledge and deeds are concerned. It is great way to reform oneself. On the other hand, it is harmful to sit with those who are imperfect in knowledge and deeds. Although there is no harm in gathering where the masses are admonished and advised, it is better to avoid them, particularly in these times. If a scholar is compelled to attend them then too it is better keep away so that heart is protected. There should only be words of preaching and admonition and no gossip. Let alone the masses, often the gathering of the *ulama* are not free from harm because their objective in learning is not to put it to practice but they acquire knowledge for its sake only and their meetings do not touch upon the hereafter and fear of Allah. Rather, there is backbiting, bragging about their superior knowledge over other people and worldly progress. Moreover, their hearts have the filthy malady of jealousy in acute form. As for the company of the rulers and kings it is the cause of religious degeneration, for, even if a worldly office is assigned then it is associated with tyranny and oppression.

In short, the only company that is commended is of those

ulamā and righteous men who are firmly established on the practical side too act at the same time as they are perfect in learning.

In these times, I have seen many people who spend money to acquire the office of judge so that they may honour and fame.

The company of the ignorant sufis too is not without peril. Because of lack of knowledge they are out of the path of truth. They think of themselves as saintly and regard it below their dignity to go in public. This is ostentation. *Tāhir ibn Husayn* رحمة الله عليه asked a sufi, "Since how many years have you been in Iraq?" He said, "I have been here for twenty years and have been fasting continuously for thirty years." *Tāhir ibn Husayn* رحمة الله عليه reminded him, "I asked you one question but you gave me two answers." They sit outside the mosque doing nothing as though running their shops where they receive *sadaqah* and *zakah* from the people. Most of them do not offer the supererogatory *salah* or the *tahajjad*. Their only task is to eat, drink and dance. They invent such things as are not traced in the *Shari'ah*. They wear thick woollen dress and their kind of *zuhd* entails them to wear the barest minimum and most brittle sort of garments. But their hidden life is shameful. In contrast, the Prophet ﷺ had said to *Maalik ibn Fudālah* رضي الله عنه when he had seen him in a bad shape with unkempt hair, "Do you not have any property?" He said, "Of course, Allah has bestowed in me all kinds of wealth." The Prophet ﷺ said, "When Allah, Majestic and Glorious bestows blessing on His slave, He wants to see its signs on him." The ignorant sufis say that there is no need to learn and such other things." There is the heart and Allah, That's all." I have written on their sayings and deeds in my book *Talbis Iblis*. Thus we must refrain from unnecessary relationship and mixing with their likes.

Insisting on the pleasure of the soul:-

There is not anyone more ignorant than one who indulges in the desire of the soul. These are of two kinds: the permissible are disallowed. Even the permissible are not had without overriding the significant deeds of religion, and

even a wee bit of it is accompanied with tons of sorrow and, in spite of that, one does not have a proper enjoyment. If anyone seeks them knowing all this, then he has a mental problem and physical weakness. How surprising that even with the knowledge he does not work for the hereafter!

As for the second kind of pleasure, we have spoken on it previously. It is forbidden and punishable both in this world and the next.

By Allah, since receiving the permissible pleasure obstructs rise of excellence and merit, the position of the forbidden can easily be imaged. May Allah enable us to see the truth. Aameen!

Reasons for lethargy:-

I have seen people who listen to sermons, remember the hereafter, weep for fear of the hereafter resolve to reform and atone for their faults, but fail to follow their resolve. They do not perform deeds. Rather, they sometime turn to the prohibited. I reflected on that and found three reasons for their lethargy:

- i).....being mindless of the evil of a prompt desire,
- ii).....posting repentance to Allah, and this is very dangerous because death may come anytime and this is why the Prophet ﷺ had said, "Offer the *salāh* as though you are departing from the world."
- iii).....hope for Allah's mercy but forget that He is also severe at retribution, for, mercy does not mean soft-heartedness otherwise the bird would not have been slaughtered, and no child put to hardship, and no thief's hand would have been amputated.

Keep away from what arouse pride:-

I reflected on the hadith that the Prophet ﷺ wore a ring but then took it off and threw it away.^① He disliked off

①..... Bukhari # 5865, Muslim 53-2091.

anyone to adorn himself with this kind of an ornament. I also reflected on a man who wore beautiful garments, combed his hair and walked pompously, but he was swallowed by the earth and continues to go down and will go down till the Last Hour.^② I arrived at the conclusion that a believer should not wear proud garments. This creates egoism and it proper for one to be humble before the Creator of the universe. Some ulama of the Banu Israil fought off the tendency of a proud walk by using a walking stick. Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله تعالى عنها once wore a garment that she liked, but the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah does not look at you in this condition." Allah's Messenger ﷺ wore a decorated cloak but then said, "This diverted me from the *salāh*."^③

Silk is also disallowed for this very reason. The same applies to the wearing a ring and shirts with long sleeves. I do not say that these things are forbidden to use but sometimes they become instrumental in promoting arrogance, egoism and unlawful conduct.

Turning to Allah:-

If anyone resolve to streamline his heart then he must try his utmost to shun company. I found that solitude brings one's thoughts to an un confused state and provide an opportunity to read about the predecessor. Seclusion, is safety, and study of the lives of earlier authorities is a medicine. So, seclude yourself and use this medicine and it will benefit you much. When I allowed myself the company of others, my thoughts were distracted and I could not fight off negligence. Unconsciously, I allowed others to influence me. Hence, what is the point in erecting a building if one only has to demolish it. The solution is a permanent seclusion to study the lives of the worthy predecessors. A man with the power to understand recognises the illness of the heart and its movement from its place. As long as it is done feed on knowledge and biography of the greats. When there is a mingling with others, it does not accept that becomes ill. Hence, you who seek cure it, bind yourself to

②..... Bukhari, Muslim.

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solitude and try your best to avoid company. This can be done by establishing a strong relationship with the Creator of the universe, the defects of the company. When your relationship with the Creator is strong there will be no distraction by others.

Relationship with Allah brings an awakening:-

Those who walk the path of guidance and have shirked off negligence have achieved this condition by remembering Allah in everything they do. Sometimes this condition is achieved through reflecting and using the mind. In this way, man knows that there is a Creator Who demands that he should give His rights and be grateful to Him and to fear Him. He arises from his slumber of negligence.

Against the verse {إِذْ قَامُوا فَقَالُوا رَبُّنَا رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ}, the commentators have mentioned that each of the cave-dwellers sensed an awakening in his heart and said to himself, "There is a Creator of this universe." So, they went towards the wilderness and happened to converge at one place and found each other of the same point of view. This is an apparent reason of the people's awakening which is widened when they listen to sermons also. They divided into many kinds. Some are alert but their desires have an upperhand over them so that instead of profiting them, their alertness becomes an evidence against them. Some of them combat with the two positions and their intelligence urges them to practice taqwa while desires of the soul attract them to themselves. Some people succumb to the temptation after some resistance and revert to their evil ways while others have the better of their enemy at times and give in at other times and yet other fortunate ones chain their enemy who now can not go beyond tempting them. There are some very fortunate slaves of Allah who have never fallen into neglect after having awakened. They continue to progress on the path of Allah stage by stage. When they attain a higher stage they sense their shortcomings in the previous stage and seek Allah's forgiveness for that. The path to Allah, the Exalted, is not attained by walking on foot but it is achieved through the heart. The lusts are the bandits on this path which is like

a dark night whose light is search for truth that guides to Truth and prevents unnecessary movements.

What it is to boast over a beautiful body:-

Some people are really surprising because they take pride on their countenance. Their gait speaks of their arrogance, but they forget how they came into being - a few morsels and a Sip of water. When a man eats them, blood is formed which converts into sperm that lodges in his loins and when he has an intimate relationship with his wife the sperm is transferred to her womb where it turns into a human embryo and ultimately comes into this world as an infant. This infant is wrapped in a piece of cloth which it dirties with its urine and stool. This is a man's beginning. As for his end, he is buried under piles of earth and the dust to which his body will revert will go to myriad places till the day of resurrection when it will be brought together again and he will be revived. This is the story of his body. As for his soul on which his deeds depends, if it had a good conduct, excellent knowledge and a Divine awareness and was careful to give the right due on him then the extinction of the body will not be harmful for it. But, if it maintained the ugly qualities of ignorance then its fate will be worse than dust.

Deeds for Allah alone:-

The people who practice piety to please other people surprise me. They do that to incline other people towards them but they forget that hearts are in Allah's hand, for Whom deeds must be done. If He is pleased with the deeds and finds them sincere then He will incline other people's hearts to this person but if He is displeased then He will turn them away from him. If anyone seeks to attract other people, then his intention associates partners with Allah because worship should be done to please Allah alone. For a deed to be sincere, his eyes must not seek attention of other people. Perfect sincerity dislikes that anyone else should notice his deeds. Man should be disclosed to others by themselves even if he does them in secret. Hearts of the people will bear witness to a pious person's deeds. If anyone does a deed to be seen by others then that is wasted because it is not approved by the Creator nor by the creatures whose hearts will reject it. Abū Sa'eed Khudri ؓ narrated that

Prophet ﷺ said that if one of you does a deed in a desert rock that has no gates or an opening, it will, nevertheless, come out to the people just as it was performed. ❶

The evil ulama:-

An alim from an ajami (non-Arab) territory came to us. he was also the qadi of his city. I saw that his animal carried some things of gold and he himself carried silver ware and many other things use of which was forbidden. Of what use is this knowledge? Clearly, the reason was lack of knowledge of the lives of Allah's Messenger ﷺ, the saḥābah رضى الله تعالى عنهم and the tābi'in رضى الله تعالى عنهم and the worthy predecessors, and occupation in other worldly sciences, and a competition with each other in the field of knowledge. Another reason was poor understanding. Some ulama engage their children to serve their parents all night. They are good to their parents but the parents hurt their children and commit sin. But for a poor understanding no one would have been arrogant, scholars would have been in fear for their inability to be grateful to Allah and had regarded themselves humble and lower than everyone else.

Be fearful even after repenting:-

It is the demand of wisdom that even making a repentance, a person must continue to be fearful. Many people are calm after repenting for their sins as if they are certain that their repentance is an approval though that is an unknown factor. Even if repentance is granted, they must be ashamed of their sin. What I say is more explicit in a hadith. "On the day of resurrection, people will flock to Adam عليه السلام requesting him to intercede for them. But he will plead, 'I have a sin against me.' They will rush to Nūḥ عليه السلام only receive the same reply. They will get identical response from Ibrāhīm عليه السلام, Mūsā عليه السلام, Eesā عليه السلام, and all of them will forward the same plea though, in reality, there is not a sin against anyone of them. Besides they have made repentance too for that and they have been forgiven. In spite of that, they have fear."

❶-----Ahmed, Abu Ya'la, Ibn Hibban.

Very few people turn to it. They think a true repentance erases all sin. In truth, even after repenting a person must be fearful and feel ashamed.

Life is a blessing:-

How mercilessly do we waste life though we know how short it is. We also know that reward in the next world will be commensurate with the deeds performed in this world. We must use each moment of our life as best as we can and not permit our heart to neglect remembrance of the Creator of the universe and forbid the soul its desires, otherwise we will be very bad.

The reality of tasbih and istighfar:-

Many people engage in worship as habit but, as for alert ones, their habit is worship. The negligent says subḥānAllāh but it is out of habit while the other at the signs of Allah's creation and is prompted over to call subḥānAllāh. He exclaims that suddenly on seeing Allah's power. If man ponders over a pomegranate, he cannot help saying subḥānAllāh, or over the creation of chicks from eggs, or the birth of a child to a mother, and so on. The word of subḥānAllāh after pondering are tasbih, tahmid and worship. They are the hymn of the alert.

When these people think of the filth of the sins, they are worried at heart and mind, and they feel ashamed. Then they seek forgiveness. This is the reality of tasbih and istighfar. The negligent also speak these words, but there is a wide difference between the two.

Purity of heart is from taqwā:-

If anyone is blessed with purity of heart and sweetness of supplication to Allah then he must protect this pure attitude with full strength. He must refrain from making amendments in it. This is maintained through taqwā alone. Allah has blessed me with a pure heart and sweetness of supplication to him. A ruler once invited me to a meal and I could not refuse, but when I partook of the meal, I sensed the hardship within me as well as the punishment insight might take a lesson. {فاعتبروا يا اولى الابصار}

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Seeker of the hereafter is never unmindful:-

A believer's intention is about the hereafter in everything he does in this world. Nothing of the world makes him negligent of the hereafter. When men of different vocations enter an occupied place, their attention is to different things. A draper looks at curtain, a carpenter at the furniture and so on. In this way, a believer who sees darkness remembers the darkness of the grave. If he encounters hardship, he pictures the punishment of the hereafter. Nothing of the world takes his mind from Allah. He thinks of Paradise, so it becomes easy for him to encounter every hurdle in the path of paradise, like illness which does not stop him from doing deeds. He also knows that receipt of the best of fruit in paradise depends on sowing the seeds in this world. So, he takes the opportunity to sow it in the spring of life. A believer also thinks being sent to hell and punishment in the hereafter, so that he is terrified and sad. He swings between these two conditions - fear and hope. When death comes, it becomes easy for him because of hope. In the grave the angels too decide that he might rest. May Allah let us have this blessing. Aameen!

Try to protect the abode of the hereafter:-

How surprising that people see their close relatives and friends die, but continue to enjoy themselves, especially those who are above forty years of age. They have no fear at all. They have grown weak and their hair have turned grey, yet they draw no lesson.

Those who do not use their intelligence are worst than inorganic matter:-

Allah says:

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَسْجُدُ لَهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَالشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ
وَالنُّجُومُ وَالْجِبَالُ وَالشَّجَرُ وَالدُّوَابُّ (سورة حج)

This verse (of surah Hajj) says that of everything else besides man, all prostrate to Allah, but of men, most prostrate, not all. Those who do not speak do not reject their Creator but of those who speak there are the rejecters too.

Going out of home unnecessarily:-

Nothing is one harmful to a believer than the company of those who neglect the hereafter, because it is natural to man that he absorbs the nature of other people's heart in an unseen way. Outwardly, he may not behave like them. Also, those who see the world, not only incline to get it but also incite others to get their share of it.

Once, the prophet ﷺ saw a curtain on his door. He tore it off saying, "What have I to do with the world?" Once he changed the garments with designs that he was wearing saying that its markings diverted his attention. At another time, he threw off his ring, saying, "Sometime, I look towards it and sometimes towards you."

People who look at the men of the world and their homes and their luxuries and instinctively inclined to be like that. More so are they who seek the heights. The same applies to hearing songs and the company of sufis who today have nothing in common with the earlier sufis and they do not possess taqwa.

Sarriy Saqati رحمه الله عليه would weep all night and he possessed taqwa and fear of Allah. The presently sufis are nothing like him or Junayd's رحمه الله عليه worship. They are far from the ways of the Prophet ﷺ. I have spoken of this in my book Tibilis Iblis. Hence, it is imperative that those who obey Allah must not move out of their homes unless heavily compelled. If they have to go out for an unavoidable reason then they must lower their gaze and refrain from meeting anyone of high rank and office and not meet a common man unless necessary but even then with much caution. Let not anyone seek to marry many wives. He must make do with one wife who is religious-minded. A poet has said that a man uses his eyes to look around at other eyes which are harmful to his heart. Of what good is such joy that hurts?

A man, particularly a scholar, must resort to solitude and study the lives of the righteous men. He must visit the graves of the pious men. Let him not miss the tahajjad and invocation in the night. He must remember death always so

that he does not entertain tall hopes. Let him have enough provision for the journey.

Reality of lust and other desires:-

According to hadith, "O Allah, disclose to us the things as they are." This is a great expression. Most people do not look at the reality of the things and they regard them as fleeting as the enduring. This is because their sight is on the current scene.

O man, do you not see that pleasure will end but their effects will remain? If the thief when he steals sees his hand being cut then it will be easy for him to quit stealing. He who hoards wealth but does not spend knows not that wealth is an instrument to objectives and needs. In the same way, let man see how his sperm is produced through eating and drinking a lot. Shari'ah has commanded that it should be used at a lawful place. The hardships, punishment and disgrace that follow adultery are the result of just a moment's pleasure which is not just worthwhile when these things are considered. Allah's displeasure is also occurred. Allah says, "Do not approach adultery. It is indecent and an evil path." The Prophet ﷺ said, "After idolatry (or polytheism) the gravest sin is to put the sperm in an unlawful womb."^①

Allah has placed lust in order to retain humanity

Desires of the soul are temporary:-

Consignment to hell is because of disobedience for which pleasure are responsible. The pleasure are made up of innumerable hardships and resentments so that pleasure is not in fact. Why does an intelligent person then let himself go to hell because of these hardships. Adultery is one of these pleasure. This is a temporary affair and brings about disgrace and punishment. Alcoholism is another of these pleasures that dirties the mouth, pollutes the garments and damage the mind, punishment and other disadvantages notwithstanding. Other illegal pleasure are of the same nature. The resultant punishment is quite out of proportion

①..... Ibn Abū Dunyā

to the small pleasure. Some pious slaves of Allah use their mind and see how much suffering will follow the momentary pleasure. So they throw at the temptation and protect themselves from many hardships.

Success lies in obeying intelligence:-

One who uses his mind is safe. He will believe in the existence of Creator. He will then realise that the Creator has permitted certain things and disallowed some others. He will know that on the day of resurrection he will be questioned about the commands. The obedient will be rewarded and the disobedient will be punished on that day. Thus, he will keep away from all unlawful things. How many have used their mind and preserved their worldly life and their hereafter and earned respect of other people. They live happily and others do not enjoy even a fraction of their enjoyment.

Cause of negligence:-

This happens because of poor knowledge which is the result of laziness. Only one devoted to learning spend his energy towards acquiring knowledge. He must persevere hardship that will come in his path. Allah says {مَنْ لَكَ ابْتَلَى} الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَزَلُّوا زِلْزَالًا شَدِيدًا. If he is patient, his work his ranks will be elevated. Ahmad ibn Hanbal رحمه الله عليه preferred to acquire knowledge over worldly betterment though he was financially weak. He gave up forty years to acquire knowledge and did not marry. A needy person must emulate him. But who has enough strength to do as he did. He rejected (an offer of) fifty dirhams and used salt as his staple food. The result is before us. How well is his name established! And his grave is visited by elite and masses. How much reward awaits him in the hereafter! In contrast, many a scholar chose comfort to hardship, and established links with kings. Their pleasure ended in a little time and death brought disgrace. And the regret is unending. Imām Shāfi'i رحمه الله عليه said, "O soul, this is for a few days, so be patient. The hardship will end like a dream." Poverty with knowledge must be endured bravely.

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If you lose knowledge for kingship, then that is not acceptable. It is because of knowledge that Allah saved you from evil and sins. Many ulama who were careless passed away in regret. Someone saw my shaykh, Ibn Zā'farāni رحمه الله in a dream. He said, "Most of you waste your time in negligence while we (the dead) pass it in regret." Be sure that with base desire, you cannot attain excellence, for, a slight lapse turns a beautiful face into an ugly one.

Use intelligence and wisdom:-

A man who has perfect intelligence has a strong wisdom, shrewdness and sagacity. He finds his way out of a misfortune easily. Hassan Basri رحمه الله said, "If a thief was clever, he would be safe from his hand amputated." Look at the brothers of Yūsuf عليه السلام. They tried to get their father's favour so they put Yūsuf عليه السلام out of his sight, but their father grief over his son was an obstacle preventing his favour from them. He father become angry at them. They never imagined that Yūsuf عليه السلام would disclose their mischief to their father. They also forgot to tear his shirt when they told him that a wolf had devoured Yūsuf عليه السلام. Then he addressed them as a king (and they had not recognised him), and asked them to bring their other brother, they did not think why he was intrested in him.....

Sincerity in deed:-

Every deed should be for Allah who alone is enough for you against everyone. If you displease Him in order to pursue base desires or to please other then it will be the other way about and your objective will fail.

The Prophet ﷺ said, "If anyone displeases Allah to please the people then those who praise him will blame him." The pure, chaste life is of one who obeys Allah's commands and respects His decree. It is to be chaste in privacy and remember Him in public. You must pray to Him always, So He will cause you to love Him and you will be enabled to rely and trust Him. He too will love you. If you are not like this then there is no good in it.

Self love:-

It is very harmful for man to love himself. This malady is very common. The Muslims, Jews and Christians also suffer from it. They do not reflect on the proofs of prophethood nor are prepared to listen to the Qur'ān or any other heart-rendering words. Rather, they flee from it. Every egoist regards him self as true and religion he follows as true. The Khawarij who rebelled against Ali عليه السلام were also like that. When Ibn Abbās عليه السلام preached to them, two thousand of them relented, but Ibn Muljam stood his ground and regarded it as his religion duty to slay Ali عليه السلام. When he was arrested and his limbs were cut off, he did not offer resistance and when he was asked bring his tounge out, he said, "How can that be? I cannot wait even for a moment without remembering Allah." How can such a conduct be cured. Many rulers deem it their right to kill the people and they do not seek the opinion of the ulama on this matter.

As for the masses, they take pride in Allah's mercy and forgiveness to become bold and commit more sin. Some rely on their creed on the sunnah and some rely on their good deeds. But proof should be relied upon.

Every sin is punished:-

Every deed good or bad is certainly recompensed. It is wrong to imagine that a sin is forgiven. Sometimes, the punishment is awarded after a period of time. There might be very few deeds that are not punished, for, Allah says: {مَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا يُجْزِ بِهِ}. Prophet Aadam عليه السلام took just a morsel and you know what happened. Wahb ibn Munabbih said that Allah asked him if He had not created him and settled him in his house and made the angels prostrate to him, yet he disobeyed Him. "I will fill the earth with others like you and if they disobey Me, I will put them with the disobedient." So, Jibril عليه السلام brought him down to the earth and he wept for three hundred years at Jabl Hind. His tears flowed into rivers and canals growing pure trees.

Similarly Prophet Da'wūd عليه السلام was punished just because of glance and kept crying and his tears grew grass.

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Yaq'ub ﷺ slaughtered a kid in the presence of its mother so had to endure separation from Yūsuf ﷺ.

Yūnus ﷺ walked out of the village before receiving Allah's command. He was swallowed by a fish.

Allah said to Armiya ﷺ that his people had disobeyed Him though had raised them in honour, so He would punish them by subjecting them to a large, hard-hearted army. Armiya ﷺ pleaded that they were the offspring of Ibrāhim ﷺ and the ummah of Mūsā ﷺ and of Dāwūd ﷺ. Allah said that He had honoured these Prophets عليهم السلام because of their obedience.

When the saintly man stared at the beautiful face, he was punished forty years later and made to forget the Qur'ān. Another saint joked with a man who had no teeth, so he was punished and he lost all his teeth. When I looked at a woman, another man looked at my wife which displeased me. Ibn Sirin رحمه الله عليه taunted a man because of this poverty. So he too became poor. The minister of Al-Muqtafa billah, Ibn Hasir, wrongly fined a man with three thousand dirhams, so the khalifa too punished him with a large fine. But, when he paid three thousand dirhams, he pardoned the balance.

I myself often find that I am punished for certain mistakes when hardship or grief overtakes me. So, man must do many pious deeds to compensate for his shortcomings and even then continue fear. Allah did accept the repentance of the Prophet ﷺ. But we see in the hadith that Prophet Aadam ﷺ will say, "My sin", and so the other Prophets عليهم السلام.

Question.....The words of the Qur'ān {مَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءً يُجْزَ بِهِ} and he who does evil will be punished for it} emphasise that (sin will be punished and) Allah will never forgive a sinner though He will approve his repentance and even forgive the sinner.

Answers.....

(1) This verse reflect to a habitual sinner who dies without repenting.

(2) This verse is universal in application. When it was revealed, Abū Bakr ؓ asked, "O Messenger of Allah, will each our deed be rewarded (or punished)?" He said, "Do you fall sick, face sorrow, or undergo hardship? These are punishment of deeds."^①

Besides, even after repenting, a believer is haunted by grief over his sin all the time. So, do not prefer a moment's joy to get a life time's punishment.

Restraining (or questioning) the soul:-

One day, I took account of myself and found that Allah has been much merciful to me with successive bounties and favours since my childhood. He has concealed my defects and given me no punishment. On my part, I have shown gratitude only orally and done nothing else. I saw that if I was punished for my sins I would have perished and if they were disclosed then I would have been disgraced. (Let not anyone suppose that these were graves sins. No, But one in my position is not expected to commit anything like that too.) So, I prayed: {اللهم بحمدك وسترك علي اغفر لي} then I called upon my soul to give thanks to Allah for his blessings, but justice could not be done to it. While I kept asking Allah for my needs, I did not demand of my soul to desist from disliked deeds and to thank Allah. So, I wept before Allah and hoped to attain the ranks of the greats. My life is over but I did not yet get my wish. Ibn Aqil Abu Wafa as like me in that he too wept for his shortcomings. *Some of his words* are: "O rebellious soul! You compose words that I may begin a debate and so are known as debater. But, You have wasted the most precious possession of the world, your life. You have gathered nothing for the hereafter. Alas! Today, I am on the surface of the earth and tomorrow I will be under it. After three days, My body will be dust. People will say that a righteous scholar is dead but, if they were aware of my soul as it really is then they would not even like to bury me. By Allah, it is like an enemy that I described today the problems of my soul and weep over it as those who weep over the dead, because there is no one to weep over my

①Ahmad 1/29 Mustadrat Haakim 3/74, Tabarani.

unseen difficulties. By Allah, I have no deed that I may regard as good on the virtue of which I may beseech Allah to forgive me. In spite of that, Allah has treated me well. He always approved my prayer and granted me everything. He is Independent, Gracious. On my part, I do not even thank Him. And I have no excuse for that. By Allah, He created me with a sound body and filled my heart with the light of wisdom so that I deciphered complex sciences. Alas! I did not spend my life for His pleasure. People have a high opinion of me but my limbs will speak against me and disgrace me when witnesses are called. O Allah, accept my repentance. I have come after fifty years of my life have passed. My knowledge has no means except regret and shame and repentance for my deeds. O Allah, I did not disobey You in ignorance of Your blessings, nor forgetfully. But, O Allah, Your mercy is all-embracing. Just for the sake of Your compassion forgive me my previous sins".

Advice to the scholars and ascetics:-

O you company of the ulama and the zuhād (zāhids)! You know well that deeds depends on the intentions behind them. You are also unaware of the command {أَلَا لِلَّهِ الدِّينُ الْخَالِصُ} and that the worthy predecessors were careful to form a sound intention before doing anything. But you, O ulamā of debates, raise your voice to gain supremacy. Have you not heard the hadith, "If anyone seeks knowledge that he might use it to complete with the ulamā, dispute with the foolish or attract the attention of the masses to him then he will not smell the fragrance of Paradise?" Some ulama give their verdicts though they are not eligible. Our predecessors kept away from issuing fatwa (edicts). O pretending sufis and zahids, Allah knows the secret too. You show your poverty and keep in public but look at your desires and your private life. Ibn Sirin رضى الله عنه laughed in public but wept all night when he was alone. Sufyān رضى الله عنه said to his students, "How bad that you offer the salāh when the people watch you, but go to sleep when no one sees you!" How ill it be when intentions are examined? Come, wake up, seek forgiveness and walk the straight Path before your soul regrets.

يَا حَسْرَتَا عَلَى مَا فَرَّطْتُ فِي جَنْبِ اللَّهِ

Use your intelligence that Allah has given you and you will realise that there is nothing of pleasure in the world. What little is found is bound with scores of hardships, like a wife who might be nagging or the fear of losing her looms overhead, and the children whose upbringing is a matter of concern and they are ultimately separated. So too if an indecent man loves a young boy then he is disgraced in the world.

So, man must be content with what Allah has given him and use that for the safety of his religion and body, and he must not pursue desires. If anyone keeps the hereafter in mind and endures hardship then ultimately he will receive uncountable delights. But laziness will bring ignorance and sorrow. The devil's net to trap men is through making them neglect knowledge and indulge in lust. He does not let them use intelligence. He instigates the poor and needy to give up Islam. Some of them curse time and abuse the world (but this is foolish because everything is as Allah decrees). Some reject the hereafter. Those who are wise and knowledgeable are tempted by the devil to take up scholastic theology so that many learned one's begin to quote the philosophers of the past, Socrates, Jalinus, etc, though they had no knowledge of the Shari'ah of Muhammad ﷺ and were not his followers. They did as their souls guided them while our predecessors learnt the Qur'ān and hadith and taught them to their children. When a child came to an age of understanding, they made him memorise the Qur'ān and hear the hadith. In this way, faith was well-grounded in their hearts since childhood. Today, people neglect this and teach their children other sciences.

Spending life wisely:-

How surprising that man does not understand his creation, and fails to honour its demands. He waste his life knowing how short it is. These are the days to do something, not to sit idly. Man is commanded to spend and oppose his soul but he is stingy. But, when death is near, he leaves instructions on where to use his wealth. That is of no use. No

one follows his instructions. He has no right over the property after his death. He must see the difference in his two conditions and use his brain. He alone fortunate who is always alert against his soul, uses his intelligence and values time.

Allah's love:-

Only as aversion to the world is love of Allah. He who seeks delight from the permitted things of this world will notice that every delight is necessarily accomplished by a bitterness and every comfort is fatigue. Observe! Allah's Messenger ﷺ loved (Sayyidah) Ayshah رضى الله تعالى عنها but the case of ifk (which was a scandal) interrupted them. When he inclined towards (Sayyidah) Zaynab رضى الله تعالى عنها he received the command { فَلَمَّا قَضَىٰ زَيْنَبُهَا وَطَرًا }. When the beloved joins, the eye of intelligence perceives separation from her and that is more painful. An intelligent person should conclude from this that Allah wants man's aloofness from the world. So, derive from the only so much profit as is necessary. Let all your thought centre round your Creator. If anyone turns away from this path then surely he will face anxiety.

Peace of mind for concentration:-

It is necessary for one who believes in Allah and His commands that he should concentrate on the Being of Allah and fulfill His commands. For that, it is very necessary to have peace of mind and undisturbed thoughts. This can be achieved only if desires are kept in check, and other obstacles must be removed. There are two chief obstacles:

1).....To surrender to every desire of the soul, for, this is an unending chain and anyone who surrenders to them loses both the world and his religion without really getting anything but that the good things, property, authority or high office.

2).....To mingle with the people unnecessarily and roam about in public places which will raise more desires and erase the idea of death from his mind and he will lead a life of ease, negligence and laziness, and will not be inclined to obey. Such a person will find it difficult –if not impossible

to - acquire knowledge and devote himself to worship. He will waste his time away from home.

He who craves to put his thoughts together and his heart at peace must go for solitude so much so that he hears no one. Then, his mind will be ready to gain an awareness. If it becomes very necessary to meet anyone, then he must finish his task and hurry back to his solitude. This is the only method to get security. The more he ponders over its virtue, the more avenue will open for him.

Significance of sincerity:-

The so - called ascetics of today are bereft of sincerity and live a life of hypocrisy and ostentation. Some of them have gone to extremes of seclusion, neither meeting a friend nor paying a sick visit. They do this on the presumptions that they are aloof from the people to be able to worship Allah.

But this was not the approach of the Prophet ﷺ or the saḥābah رضى الله تعالى عنهم. He would visit a sick person and go to the market. Abu Ubaydah ibn Jarrah ؓ and Abū Talhah ؓ were grave diggers. Among the ṭābiʿīn Ibn Sirin رضى الله تعالى عنه gave bath men's dead bodies. But, saintly men of our times, observe silence before the masses and stay away from them. This is a sign of hypocrisy. Ibn Sirin laughed among the people during day and wept before Allah in the night. The so called ascetics of our times emphasise on optional ṣalāh in the mosque and the on-lookers praise them for their piety, but the Prophet ﷺ said, "Let these (optional ṣalāh) be at home."

These also say that they fast every day, always. The people speak of them highly, but they do not know that they are ostentatious. Some of them, recite the Qur'ān every Friday morning and recite mu'awwizatān (the last two surahs) so that people might believe that they have completed the Qur'ān to the end. Some of them are not eligible but do take zakah from the people and they do not care what kind of an earning the person who donates to him has. Some of them visit the rulers and receive their gifts howsoever they may have acquired that property. May Allah correct our intentions Aameen!

Value of time:-

I seek refuge from lazy people who always seek rest. Many comes to me too, very often and try to waste time. They indulge in gossip and backbiting. This weakness has spread much in our times. One cannot do away with it altogether nor allow everyone to meet him all the time. So, I worked out a moderate course, avoiding company as far as possible but yielding to it when it is necessary but only for a limited time. Then I set out a separate time for it. In order that there was no wastage of precious moments during meetings, I attended to some menial tasks like putting my papers together and so on, for these things did not require mental attention. May Allah enable us to value time. Aameen! Many people do not know what the aim of life is. They sit idly in the markets, engage in story telling or play. Allah has given honour to His close slaves who value time {وَمَا يُلْقَاهَا إِلَّا ذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ}

Keep away from major sin too:-

Many people keep away from minor sins but persist in backbiting others. They give charity but do not stay away from interest transactions. They offer the tahajjud but do not offer the prescribed salāh at the right time. They observe the off-shoots punctiliously but are negligent of the roots. The reasons are their habits, and the strong desire of the soul. The latter can make a person deaf, blind and senseless. This is how the brothers of Yousuf ؑ behaved. They were careful not to take the unlawful from what was not in their power but did not hesitate to throw Yousuf ؑ in the well. When they had entered Eygpt they tied sacks on the camels' mouth that they may not eat what belong to others.

Some people misinterpret laws to show the unlawful as lawful. This is what the Jewish ulama did. They recognised the truth of Islam - as did the Emperor of Rome - but did not accept because that would have left them without authority.

May Allah protect us from procrastinating on the fundamentals and from giving free rein to our desires. If the

desires are allowed free movement then they graze on the green pastures of taqwā and destroy it. Base desire of the soul are like chained beasts. If they are held firmly at the chain they will cause no bloodshed, otherwise there will be destruction all round. A sensible person is alert all ways.

The days following the pleasure will be severe:-

The most ignorant person is one who prefers the person to the future though that means a bad end. How many kings and rulers have lived luxuriously in sin only to repent at the time of death whose bitterness wiped out all their rejoicing. This should be enough sorrow, and the perpetual punishment of the hereafter is yet to be faced. Certainly, the world is dear to human beings. But, we must see how it is acquired and learn of the means, so that we may save ourselves from the evil consequences, otherwise how can the delight be approved if burning is to follow (in hell). Will you like to sit in authority, if you are told that, in exchange, you will be consigned to death after year? Rather, you will prefer a year's hard labour to earn delight thereafter.

Dalaf Abū Danūf said that after his father's death, he dreamt that someone asked him to accept the invitation of the amir-ul-muminin. So he went. His companion took him in a fearful desolate broken down house with black walls and falling roof and broken doors. Then, he took him inside a room whose walls and floor had signs of burning in fire. He found his father sitting down, his head between his knees. On seeing him, the father exclaimed, "Dalaf, you here?" He said, "Yes I am here. May Allah keep the amir well." The father said(in poetic form), "Tell my family members and relatives of the failure in the barzakh. Conceal nothing. I was asked about my performance. Consider my terrifying experience and hardships and have mercy on me." Then he asked him if he had understood and son confirmed he had on which the father said(again in poetic language), "If we were to die and left alone then death would be a means of comfort for every living being."

Jihād against desires of the soul:-

When I thought of the ability of a believer over trial and pleasures and the need of my doing, so my tongue let out voluntarily {سبحن الله Subhan Allah}. I said that this was the occasion for faith to be manifest, not the occasion to offer two rakaat.

Yūsuf ؑ was established on authority and attained the peak of good fortune to achieve great success there. Ponder, o my brothers! What would have happened if he had succumbed to the desires of his soul?

A believer comes across such occasions and faces trial. If he will not use the weapons of defence-remembering punishment and consequences-then he will fail. It is as though he is told to stay put and the consequences of giving in are remorse and weeping, nothing else. If he falls into the quick sand of pleasures then he cannot get out of it without suffering wounds. How many got trapped never to escape. The plight of the brothers of Yūsuf ؑ is apparent from their plea to him to be charitable to them. There was a great difference between them. Though their repentance was accepted, how can a piece of cloth that is torn and mended be like a sound one? Often a broken bone cannot be repaired and if it is repaired, it does not restore to its previous conditions.

O my brothers! when the soul is on the verge of desires and pleasures, you must be fully alert.

Address to the soul:-

I observed that when ever the soul is inclined to the lust, the mind and heart stop functioning and no admonition is effective. When this happened one day, I shrieked at it, saying, "O soul, woe to you !Pause a bit. Let me converse with you a little after which do as you like. It is evident that you are less inclined to the permitted pleasure but more to the unlawful. Let two things be clear. As far as the permitted are concerned, you are at liberty, but getting them is difficult because property is not sometimes easily got and hard work and labour too do not always bring success, while precious time goes out of hand. Besides, even after getting them, the

accompanying disadvantages are not unknown to anyone, like overeating results in certain illnesses, and so with other things. As for the unlawful, there are, of course, the same problems as mentioned in the foregoing lines. Besides, honour is at stake badly and there will be disgrace and terrible shame in the world, and in the hereafter there will be severe punishment while the greatest pleasure lies in overcoming desires. O soul, do you not look at one who has given in to desires? How contrast one who overcomes lust is very happy because his heart is strong. He has suppressed desires so do not look at desires with approval. Do not be like a thief who, when he steals, looks only at the booty, and overlooks the (punishment of) severing his hand. To ponder over the fate and consequences, and to see pleasure turn to bitterness, you have to open the eye of insight. Remember, the first sin is like the hungry man's first morsel. Rather, there will be unhesitated desires for more food."

Therefore, a sensible person must keep before him the many advantages of controlling desires and preventing the soul from (asking for) them. This will indeed be a means of security.

To ignore the demands of knowledge is very risky:-

I found that the views of my soul on knowledge to be better. It prefers learning over every thing. It argues that acquiring knowledge is better than engaging in optional salah. It has a better argument. Anyone more engaged in optional salāh and fasting then learning is weak in the fundamentals. This for the soul is correct. But this is only from a theoretical point of view and it is weak from the practical side. So I shrieked and asked the soul, "How knowledge help you? Where is fear of Allah? And where is the anxiety on sins? and, the quality of fear? Have you not heard about the worship or the front ranking ulama of this ummah and their efforts? Did not the Prophet ﷺ have swelling on his feet because of lengthy standing in salāh? Did not Abū Bakr ؓ weep often? And Umar ؓ had marks on his cheek from tears. Did Uthman ؓ not read the whole Qur'an in one rakah? And Ali ؓ wept so much in salāh that

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I found that the views of my soul on knowledge to be better. It prefers learning over every thing. It argues that acquiring knowledge is better than engaging in optional salah. It has a better argument. Anyone more engaged in optional salah and fasting then learning is weak in the fundamentals. This for the soul is correct. But this is only from a theoretical point of view and it is weak from the practical side. So I shrieked and asked the soul, "How knowledge help you? Where is fear of Allah? And where is the anxiety on sins? and, the quality of fear? Have you not heard about the worship or the front ranking ulama of this ummah and their efforts? Did not the Prophet ﷺ have swelling on his feet because of lengthy standing in salah? Did not Abū Bakr ؓ weep often? And Umar ؓ had marks on his cheek from tears. Did Uthman ؓ not read the whole Qur'an in one rakah? And Ali ؓ

his beard become wet. Hasan Basri رحمه الله عليه spent his life in great anxiety. Sa'eed ibn Mussayib رحمه الله عليه stayed in the mosque always and for forty years he did not miss a single congregation. Aswad ibn Asid رحمه الله عليه turned pale because fasting on successive days. Did the daughter of Rabi ibn Khaytham not say to him that all people did sleep, 'Why do you not sleep?' He said, 'Daughter, your father is afraid of punishment in the night.' Abu Muslim Khawlanî رحمه الله عليه had kept a whip in the mosque to warn his soul against lethargy. Yazid ar-Raqqāshi kept fast for forty years, yet regreted that others had surpassed them in worship. Mu'tamar's son Mansūr kept fast for forty years. Ibrahim ibn Adham was so afraid (of Allah) that he had blood in his urine. And the four imams Abū Hanifa رحمه الله عليه, Maalik رحمه الله عليه, Shafi'i رحمه الله عليه and Ahmad ibn Hanbal رحمه الله عليه were ascetics and great worshippers. So, o soul, beware of knowledge without deeds. Laziness in performing deeds is only the work of the handicapped."

A poet has said that when you are free and have gained some spite, prepare provision for the journey because time lost is never recovered.

Make the effort with the soul with wisdom:-

This is a great jihād, Most of the ulamā do it with wisdom. Some of them forbid the soul the lawful rights. It is wrong for two reasons:

1).....Sometimes they prevent it from permitted desires but allow it pleasure another greater desire. Example is that they prevent a permissible desire and become well-known for it, so the soul is pleased with fame and does not turn to this desire anymore. But, it can fall into a more risky evil by thinking of itself as superior to others.

2).....We are commanded to protect the soul and are responsible for it. The permitted desires are among the means and on them depends its potency the soul will be given those things.

We are like the agents for its protection. We are not its master. Rather, it is placed within us as a trust. So, it must not be prevented all its desires which would be very risky.

Besides, extreme restrictions might result in completely breaking away. It is like an intelligent patient combating his illness. He has to be given the bitter pill in the hope of recovery, mixing with it some sugar or sweet. The patient does not eat more than the diet allowed to him.

A sensible believer must treat his soul in the same manner. He must hold the bridle firmly though allowing a little latitude at times. But if it begins to turn away from the path, he must pull the bridle heavily. If it refuses to return, then he may apply pressure and pull it forcefully. It must be treated like a stupid wife. If she disobeys, give some admonition. If that fails, warn her by using another bed. If that fails resort to physical beating. The best stripes is that of resolve and firmness. The struggle with the soul is about deeds and the weapons to use are admonition, advice and caution.

Thus, it is inclined to mingle with others and to adopt base morals then acquaint it with Allah's greatness, "Are you not one whom Allah created with His hand? And commanded His angels to prostrate before you? And made you vicergent on His earth? He brought you against Paradise." If it shows arrogance, remind it that it was a drop of sperm, dirty and impure. An ordinary animal kills it and tiny insect hurts it. If you see it keeping away from deeds then remind it of the rights of the Master and the reward for deeds. If it moves towards desires, warn it of the severe punishment against that, as Allah says:

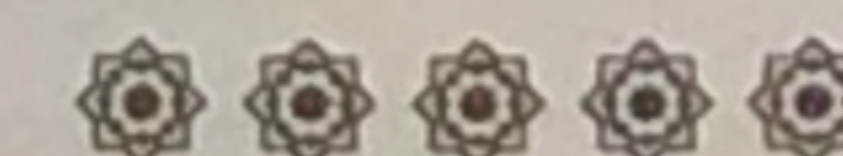
قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ سَمْعَكُمْ وَأَبْصَارَكُمْ

and about the figurative punishment :

سَأَصْرِفُ عَنْ آيَاتِيَ الَّذِينَ يَتَكَبَّرُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ

Recite to it these verses to warn it.

This is the oral jihād against the soul while that is the practical jihād.



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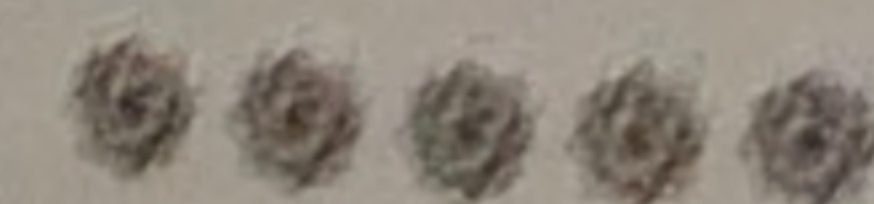
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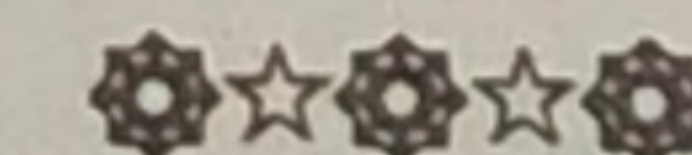


GLOSSARY

AH	:	after hijra (when the Islamic calender commences)
ahadith	:	pl. of hadith (qv)
aalim	:	scholar.
ahlul bayt	:	people of the house of the Prophet ﷺ.
ajami	:	non-Arab person
ajam	:	non-Arab
asr	:	the afternoon salāh
barzakh	:	the intervening period between death and resurrection (wheresoever the corpse may or may not be/buried/burnt etc.)
bid'ah	:	innovation in religion.
dhikr	:	remembrance of Allah.
fard	:	absolute obligation (like prescribed salah, fasting, zakah, etc)
fatwa	:	edict on a religious issue.
fatawa	:	pl. of fatwā.
fiqh	:	jurisprudence.
firdaws	:	the central and highest place in paradise
hadith	:	Prophet's ﷺ saying, deed or tacit approval
hafiz	:	one who has memorised the Qur'ān (or the hadith, etc)
hadith qudsi:		Allah's words apart from the Qur'ān inspired to the Prophet ﷺ, or shown in the dream.
hadd	:	prescribed punishment.

imam	:	leader, ruler, leader who leads the congregational salah.
isha	:	the salah in the night, about 11/2 hours after sunset
istighfar	:	to seek forgiveness of Allah
ifk	:	slander, false accusation.
jihad	:	one of the prescribed duties on Muslims, to wage war against the infidels who oppress Muslims.
juzz	:	a part, one of the 30 parts of Qur'an
jumadi uth-thani:		Islamic month, (seven month)
khalifah	:	caliph
khilafah	:	caliphate
kaba'ir	:	the gravest sins, major sins
muhaddith:		scholar of hadith
muhaddithun (or muhaddithin):		pl. of muhaddith
madrasah	:	institution of religious education
madaris	:	pl. of madrasah.
munkarat	:	pl. of munkar
munkar	:	evil action, rejected.
mujahid	:	one who makes effort, warrior
maghrib	:	sunset, salah after sunset.
muawwizatan:		the two last surah (113, 114) of the Qur'an.
nafl	:	optional, supererogatory
qadi	:	judge
rafid	:	shi'a
riqaaq	:	soft heartedness, compassion.
sufi	:	mystic.
seerah (sirah):		Prophet's biography, life
sahabah	:	pl. of sahabi
sahabi	:	companion of the Prophet
shariah	:	Islamic code of life, set of laws

sayyidah	:	a title of honour for women, the lady
sayyidina	:	our master, title of honour for men.
sadqah	:	charity (also zakah, qv)
shaykh	:	old man, religious elder, teacher
tafsir	:	exegesis of the Qur'an
taqwa	:	righteousness, fear of Allah
tahajjud	:	optional salah in the night on awakening from sleep
tabi'i	:	successor of the sahabi
tabi'un(tabi'in):		pl. of tabi'i
tawaf	:	circuit ambulation of the Ka'bah
tasbih	:	glorifying Allah, rosary, to say subhanAllah.
tahmid	:	to say Al Hamdulillah, to praise Allah
usul wa-furi:		fundamental principles and derivatives
ulama	:	pl. of aalim(qv)
wajib	:	obligatory which is slightly less in emphasis to fard.
zindiq	:	athiest, irreligious, infidel
zuhr	:	the noon salah offered after the declination of the sun from its meridian.



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SINS

Abdur Rahman ibn al-Jawzi has created an awakening in his readers by pointing out the evil effects of sins. He says that the root of sins lies in arrogance, greed and jealousy. Iblis, the devil, fell from grace into humiliation because he was arrogant. Aadam عليه السلام had to vacate paradise because of greed and desire. And his first son, Qabil, made bold to slay his brother, Habil, because of jealousy. Disbelief has its origin in arrogance, disobedience in greed and avidity, and oppression and rebellion in jealousy. Among the effects of sin are diminished ability to do pious work, corrupted opinion, concealing truth and reduced inclination to remember Allah. Disobedience to Allah causes the disobedient to face monetary stringencies and personal hardship.

This is a unique book on this subject. The author is adept and a great scholar and an ascetic. He has written books on many subjects. He says that just as water irrigates and produces crop and fire burns, piety produces love of Allah, gets answer to prayers and softens the heart, but wickedness invites punishment like earthquakes and wipes out blessing.

In short, this book is a great presentation by a great scholar. It encourages readers to piety and to keep away from sin. It is 'a must read' for everyone.

Darul-Ishaat presents its English translation for its readers.